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# OAKWOOD HALL.

VOL. II.

# OAKWOOD HALL,

## A Novel;

INCLUDING A DESCRIPTION OF

THE LAKES

OF

CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORELAND,

AND

A PART OF SOUTH WALES.

By CATHERINE HUTTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE MISER MARRIED," AND

"THE WELSH MOUNTAINEER."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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1819.

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# OAKWOOD HALL.

## LETTER XXIII.

TO MISS FREEMAN.

*Arrowby Lodge.*

THE evening after I wrote to you last, I saw the sun set behind the mountains of Westmoreland, and took leave of them for ever. The next day we arrived at this place. As Mrs. Douglas has many guests, besides Millichamp and myself, each has an opportunity of following the devices and desires of his own heart; we have one party for riding, one for walking, and another for reading and needlework, in a

morning; and never less than two card-tables in an evening.

Among the company here, are a Mrs. and Miss Mornington. The mother is a widow, very eloquent and very positive; and so firm a supporter of sacred regal rights, that she declared, at the beginning of the French revolution, she would have sacrificed one half of that people at a blow, to have made the other submit quietly to their king. She is a violent politician and philosopher, and a keen player at whist, which precludes every idea of an amiable woman. The daughter is very pretty, and not less vain; but in other respects so like Millichamp, that they are always of the same mind. When he chooses to ride, so does she; when he walks, so does she; when he reads, she is in the humour to listen; and when he plays at whist, she either plays at the same

table, or overlooks his cards. I really believe, if he were disposed to romp, she would feel the same inclination: but you may be easy, and I proud, for whenever he has an opportunity he seizes me; and if Miss Mornington seize him, he gives me half. She calls him the Philosopher.

Our conversation, at dinner, generally turns upon eating and wine; and we have a Mr. Temple, who displays much learning on these subjects. He passes his whole life between eating too much, and doing penance for it; and goes on, shortening his time of enjoyment and suffering. He is an epicure and a valetudinarian; ever studying his health, and forming good resolutions, which are broken by the first dish he likes. For this week past, it has been his daily determination to dine upon one dish: he has always exceeded

it; but to-day he has made himself ample amends for the little forbearance he has exercised. After having crammed down as much sole as he could eat, he has taken two pigeons out of a pye, and a proportionable quantity of rich crust. He is now ill. To-morrow he will do better—till to-morrow come. When I first came, I endeavoured to confirm his prudent resolves, and recalled them to his mind, when he wished to forget them. I now charitably advise him to sin on, without giving himself the trouble of repenting; since he has not strength to conquer, and only makes himself uneasy by the contest. Millichamp and he regard each other with mutual contempt.

Such characters as this are common. Hundreds daily drop into a grave dug by their palate. We have a lady here, who has accelerated her progress in a

more unusual manner; who is now an old woman of thirty-five years of age. She is the only daughter of a merchant of Nantz, and, with her mother, was driven into this country by the horrors of the French revolution in 1791.—I am going to tell you her own story.

When she was a child, her parents found it impossible to make her learn to read; and when she wanted a few months of completing her seventh year, she only knew her letters. Her father represented to her his sorrow for her ignorance, and promised her a crown, if she would read her book by her birth-day. Thus stimulated by shame and interest, she applied to it, without any instructor, and on the appointed day read it through to her father. She was many years attended by a writing-master; but she would not learn to write, because she did not like

his person. At fourteen she was rich and handsome, and sang and danced well. This she thought sufficient to secure the admiration of all mankind, which was the object she had in view, and she disdained all other acquirements. She made such use of the latter of these accomplishments, during the absence of her father and mother, that on their return they found her reduced to a skeleton. Dancing was prohibited in consequence. Mademoiselle scorned to be controuled, and continued the amusement night and day, as before; but to prevent her mother's discovering it, by her languid looks, she took the precaution of dipping her head in a bucket of cold water, as soon as she had finished. By this practice she changed her complexion, which was very beautiful, to green and purple; and brought on so

violent an illness, that she kept her bed six months, *during which time she never slept.*

At last she recovered a tolerable degree of health; but her complexion never resumed its former lustre, and she found she must have something else to trust to. She read with the same avidity she had danced, and acquired the English language without a master. She speaks it as well as a native; and assures me, that she spoke it as well as she does now, except rather slower, when she had been only three months in the country. She regards the loss of her beauty as a fortunate circumstance, as it put her upon improving her mind, and made her, as she emphatically says, find a friend in herself. She profited so well by her application, that the last year she was in France, which was the nineteenth of

her age, she was at the head of her father's counting-house. She still retains her fondness *pour la danse.*— She still dances when she has an opportunity, though she feels it destroys her, and declares she would die, rather than be controuled.

If you think this account exaggerated, my dear Margaret, I can only repeat that it is her own. I have not altered one tittle, and have frequently given you her very words. At her saying that she had passed six months without sleep, I looked incredulous.— She perceived it, and appealed to her mother, across the table, who confirmed the fact, with great earnestness.

Another of our fellow-guests is an elderly gentleman, a Captain Murray, formerly of the Navy; sensible, easy, and well-bred. He turns every thing he touches into gold: and makes even

the soles and sauces of Mr. Temple delicious morsels. This gentleman met the immortal navigator, Captain Cook, at St. Helena, as he was returning from his first voyage in the Endeavour; and frequently dined at the same table with him. He represents him as a heavy unpleasant man in conversation, with something coarse and vulgar in his manner; respected by his officers, on account of his abilities, but not beloved by them. He says his soul was wholly absorbed in the great enterprise he had engaged in, and he had neither time nor inclination to make himself agreeable. This, I dare say, has its foundation in truth.—Neither Captain Cook's education, nor situation in life, could give him polished manners. His pursuits were such as no other man's whole faculties would have been equal to; and it is probable,

that by continually keeping his eye fixed upon the great, he might overlook the little. I would as soon find fault with the majestic organ, for not having the soft tones of the musical glasses.

Are you tired of our company? or shall I tell you, that we have two animals of my own species, old maids? One is a Miss Rennel, verging upon forty, with a red face, and a nose that would not disgrace Bardolph's. This prominent feature, at first, gave me some disgust; but I found the lady so unaffected in her manners, so ingenuous, and so well informed, that its size diminished every day; and now, I am not sensible that it is either larger or redder than other people's. Her companion is a Miss Rookwood, something younger, disagreeable in her person, and more so in her manner; not de-

ficient in sense, but formal, precise, inquisitive, affected, and loquacious. Such is my natural antipathy to this lady, that I never reply to any thing she says, unless it be immediately addressed to myself; and I have forborne to inquire after some of my friends whom she has mentioned, lest my questions should engage me in a conversation with her. I could not live in paradise with Miss Rookwood.

You have done well, my dear Margaret, to visit Miss Caradine during my absence. I shall meet you with much pleasure on my return.

## LETTER XXIV.

TO MISS FREEMAN.

*Arrowby Lodge.*

It was not my intention to have remained here longer than a month; but I shall leave Mrs. Douglas something sooner, in consequence of a letter I have received from Mr. Oakwood. Our nephew, Charles Oakwood, has asked my brother's permission to pass a few months with him at Oakwood Hall; and my brother tells me, that if I can return, he will invite Miss Oakwood, his sister. Charles has been a frequent visitor at the Hall, and is not a great favourite with his uncle:

Barbara is quite a stranger. I have not seen either of them since they quitted school: but I fear their habits and ours will not mingle well together.

Our two emigrants have left Arrowby Lodge. I pity them sincerely. Accustomed to affluence—reduced to bare necessaries—and every tie which held them to the world cut asunder! If it were my misfortune to be an inhabitant of a country agitated by such convulsions, unless I were personally endangered, either by the government or the people, I would abide the storm, and settle down quietly with the mass, when the fermentation was over.

Millichamp has been playing the knight-errant, or rather the knight *divant*, in the rescue of a distressed damsel. We were five of us sailing in a small boat, on a lake in Mrs. Douglas's grounds, when Miss Morning-

ton took a fancy to sit on the top of the boat, and to set her feet on the seat. She was warned by Mr. Murray that she was in some danger; but as she was certain there was none, and Mr. Murray himself did not think there was much, he did not choose to contest the point with her. I have the faculty of sometimes seeing people's motives when they think them wholly hidden from observation, and I believe Miss Mornington had two; the first, to attract the notice of Millichamp; the second, to alarm him for her safety. In both these objects she completely failed; for he viewed her person, and her little movements, calculated to excite an apprehension of her falling, with perfect indifference—if, indeed, he saw them at all; but I suspect that he was thinking of his black ribband.

At length a gun was fired very near us, in the wood which borders on the lake. This put Miss Mornington off her guard; she really started, and she fell overboard. Millichamp started in his turn: his attention was now drawn towards the lady, and to jump after her was the work of a moment. The lake was not of a drowning depth; and the gallant knight soon caught the lovely water nymph in his arms, and bore her safely to the shore. Here he seemed much disposed to set her down, but the water had entirely deprived her of the use of her feet, and he carried her to a neighbouring cottage, whither Mrs. Douglas and I followed. I sent Millichamp home, with instructions to change his streaming garments: and Miss Mornington was arrayed in the Sunday clothes of the cottager's daughter. Mrs. Douglas would then

have ordered the carriage; but the lady was now so far recovered, that she was quite able to walk home.

At dinner I thought the cold bath had given a freshness to Miss Mornington's complexion; but she now angled for the compassion of Millichamp, and declared that she was very faint and languid: she cast down her eyes, and attempted to blush: she called Millichamp her preserver, and said that she could never be sufficiently grateful to him, for having risked his life to save her's. He was too generous to remember the service, and too disinterested to wish for a reward. Fear her not, Margaret: her little arts are so far from making an impression upon your lover, that they are not even seen by him: he carries a talisman about him which preserves him, not from the influence of evil, but of good eyes.

Mrs. Douglas, who is a Scotch woman, was well acquainted with the Lismahago of Humphrey Clinker, and says that Smollett has drawn his character faithfully. He was a Colonel Cochrane, a relation of Smollett's, and a very worthy man; but he was so highly exasperated at Smollett, for having exhibited him in a ridiculous light to the world, that he never forgave him. Mrs. Douglas says, that Colonel Cochrane dined with her one day, when Mrs. Smollett of Loch Lomond, wife of the doctor's brother, was present; and, taking up his glass after dinner, he said to her, "All our friends, but the devil take our relations." Mrs. Douglas shewed me the portrait of the colonel, sketched, unknown to him, by a gentleman at her house, as they were sitting at her table. It is the most frightful human face I

ever saw: I could scarcely be persuaded that it was not a caricature; but she and Mr. Murray, who also knew him well, both assured me it was an exact likeness. Lismahago was not so unfortunate as to be married to Tabitha Bramble: he died a bachelor, about the year 1787, at about the age of sixty-five.

We dined yesterday at the house of a gentleman in this neighbourhood, whose brother afforded us a very extraordinary degree of entertainment, though of a species I can hardly describe to you, and which, upon reflection, I am a little ashamed of. He is a younger brother, turned of thirty; possessing only a rent-charge on the estate, and living chiefly in his brother's house. He is handsome, and, while he continues silent, respectable: the moment he opens his mouth he

betrays such a poverty of understanding as I never beheld in any person above an idiot. He is almost incapable of uttering a single sentence; two in succession are absolutely beyond his powers, for he loses one before the other is finished. How could such a being afford entertainment? how excite mirth? Would it not be monstrous to laugh at him for a natural defect? That is the point I wish to make you comprehend. This gentleman possesses the risible faculties in a degree proportioned to his want of all others: his attempts to speak always end in a laugh, and a laugh so hearty, so sincere, and good humoured, that it is impossible not to join him. Though it was only his mirth which provoked ours, it seemed to him, and almost to ourselves, that his and our cause of

laughter were the same. If a person born deaf had witnessed his merriment, he must have caught the infection from his features.

The elder brother of this gentleman, whom we have often seen here, resembles him in nothing but his person: he knows every thing; and is so kind as to be always informing us of every thing. He is as fond of argument as Millichamp: every reply begins with a *but:* or if it be to a lady, as he is very polite, it is, "What you say is very right, ma'am, *but*—" He argues in a clear, decisive manner; and with his *thus*, and his *therefore*, not only convinces us of what we might have doubted, but of what nobody could have denied. Millichamp frequently enters the lists with him: but the modesty and simplicity of the one is too

hard for the imposing, reasoning, sententious gravity of the other, who does not like him for an opponent.

You will think me severe, Margaret: but forgive me. If I have eyes that discover the ridiculous in my fellow-creatures, they are not less quick in seizing the amiable and the estimable; and I have a heart to love and prize them as they deserve. To doubt this, would be doubting my love for yourself. I have put the philosophy of Millichamp to the proof: he is impatient to be with you.

## LETTER XXV.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL, BELMONT COTTAGE.

*Oakwood.*

I HAVE been at the Lakes, of which I will give you no account, because you have seen them. On my arrival at Arrowby Lodge, I found it full of company, and I determined to ramble, till the largest family had left the place. Mrs. Douglas likes society, and never goes abroad for it. Her fortune enables her to assemble a number of people round her, and she is not very difficult in her selection; persons of wit and sense entertain, and folly amuses her. She is herself good-humoured and

agreeable; the soul of the company; the maker of parties; what poor Paul of Russia offered to be, the rallying point. Though her conversation is chiefly matter of fact, her language is so correct, that it would bear committing to paper. She is never at a loss for a word; never repeats one; and hardly ever makes use of one that is superfluous.

I hastened my return to Oakwood, at my brother's request; as he expected the son and daughter of our brother Charles; and I arrived only one day before them. Millichamp was impatient to see Margaret; and as he is above disguise, he asked my permission to ride forward on his horse, the last day's journey; while James drove me home at my leisure.

This short absence has appeared longer to my brother and myself than

our long separation before. He wishes me to let my house at Belmont, and live with him entirely; but I cannot give up your society, and that of a few other friends; and, at my age, one ought not to be without a spot, of which one can say, *it is my own;* a spot we can call by that name which conveys the ideas of comfort and independence, *Home*. Our mutual inclination, however, will induce me to pass the greater part of every year of our remaining lives at Oakwood.

You know the circumstance which kept the late Charles Oakwood at a distance from his family;—his wife being a woman of low breeding, not only ignorant, but insolent. His death left his son and daughter under the care of their mother, badly educated and ill provided for. My nephew is a man of common understanding, who, from very

limited prospects, has suddenly arrived at affluence; a distant relation of his mother's having left him his fortune, because his family was more respectable than that of those who had a better title to it.

He may now reasonably look forward to the time when Oakwood shall be added; as my brother has remained so long unmarried. Such possessions and prospects might turn a strong head. Charles Oakwood's is not a strong one; I can give you an anecdote that will prove it.

When he found himself in possession of a large fortune, he thought it incumbent upon him to fit up a library. He sent for the catalogue of one of the principal booksellers in London; and, as he was ignorant of books, he naturally judged of their value by their price. He had the penetration to

discover that those which had no price marked, were above all price. These he bought; and among them many early printed books, and such as were valuable only on account of their scarcity.

For about six months, Charles Oakwood was very vain of his library, and boasted of it in all companies.—This book was *scarce*, that was *curious*; this was *rare*, and that *unique;* as he had seen them characterised in his catalogue; till, one day, a man of acknowledged taste and genius happened to say that they were all good for nothing; that the only books worth having, were the History of England and the Bible; and that these might be illustrated to any extent. My sagacious nephew caught at the idea, which he retailed as his own. He returned his Caxtons, Pynsons, and Wynkyn de

Wordes, to his bookseller, and found to his cost, that they were indeed good for nothing, being assured by the bookseller that "Nobody bought them now."

In the place of these, Charles bought Rapin's History of England, with Houbraken's Heads, and the largest folio Bible he could find. You may possibly imagine that his library is very small. No such thing; it is neither small, nor of little value. Lest you should not understand the technical term *illustrate*, I will explain it.

The Bible would be taken to pieces, and every scripture print of merit that could be purchased, would be bound up with the letter-press, opposite to the page that it illustrated. And as most of the first masters painted from Holy Writ, and many of their works have been engraved, the volumes

would be rather a collection of prints, of which the text would be an explanation, than a Bible illustrated by the engravings. If the print were too large, its margin must submit to be pared down to the size of the book; if too small, it must be let into fine paper of the proper dimensions.—So by the History of England. Every book that contained prints relating to the persons and events mentioned in the history, would be ransacked and despoiled of all that were worth taking. And when to these were added all single historical prints, such as the Dissolving of the Long Parliament, the Landing of Charles the Second, the Battle of the Boyne, and a countless et cetera; you would think the connoisseur guilty of no great exaggeration, when he said that these books might be illustrated to any extent.

Charles Oakwood has been proposing his precious library as a model worthy the imitation of his uncle. "I wonder, sir," said he, "that you should take the trouble to collect such a variety of books, when there is nothing in the world worth having, but the History of England and the Bible!"

This hit John Freeman's taste exactly. "Sir," cried John, "you are a man of judgment! There are few young gentlemen now-a-days who would be content with the Bible and the History of England! When I was young, I read nothing else; and now, I read them every day of my life."

"Read them!" repeated Charles, with a look of ineffable contempt. "They are the last books I should think of reading! but every gentleman ought to have them; and when they are properly illustrated, they are a

library of themselves, and he need have nothing more."

"I cannot argue against the merits of the Bible and the History of England," said my brother; "but I have singular notions, and I collect books for an uncommon purpose—I do read them."

My niece, Barbara Oakwood, is very beautiful, and has a larger portion of sense than her brother; but she has a confident manner, which is very unpleasing in a young woman. Indeed there is no time of life at which a woman may be intrepid. Barbara has seen little of the world, but she has read many novels; and finding in herself more spirit than tenderness, she has unfortunately copied the pert and flippant manners of some of the second rate heroines, who, whatever may be their pretensions to wit, deserve chastisement

for their want of good breeding. The mother of Barbara, vain of her daughter's person and vivacity, has regarded them as the means of her future establishment.

These young people are thrown into an unknown element at Oakwood.—My brother digs in a morning, and reads in an afternoon; and my dressing-room door never opens, unless I bid it. Charles is reduced to the necessity of driving his sister in his curricle, conversing with his groom, and seeing his hunters exercised in leaping. One of his horses has luckily flung the servant over his head, and he has been laughing ever since at the joke; but this is a gratification he cannot hope for every day. My brother has had his pianoforte put in tune for Miss Oakwood. She plays, and sings, and dresses; but where there

are none to listen or admire, the trouble is ill repaid.

Few persons have such a feeling of music, if I may so express myself, as I. I have burst into tears on hearing Cartwright play the simple tune of Auld Robin Gray, on the musical glasses; I have gone to bed at mid-day with a distracting head-ach, on hearing the Messiah performed by a full band; and I would run out of the house at any time, rather than be confined in a room with a musical young lady. Music that I do not like, I cannot bear at all; and music that I do like, makes so powerful, an impression on me, that I cannot bear it long.

I suppose Charles and Miss Oakwood had agreed to *quiz* the old bachelor and old maid to-day; and after

dinner he began by asking his sister how she liked Oakwood.

"O, amazingly," replied she; "I doat upon it. I find these trees so excessively entertaining, that I shall never endure the society of my fellow-creatures again."

"You have the advantage of me, then," said her brother; "for if it was not for the charming edifying conversation of Mr. and Mrs. Oakwood, curse me—I beg your pardon, ma'am—if I should not find the place insupportably fatiguing."

"If the trees, like those of Ovid," said Millichamp, "were each the abode of a nymph, you might think their company as agreeable as Miss Oakwood does."

"Worse and worse!" replied Charles. "I should never be able to walk through the wood for the noise.

No, if the trees must be peopled, let it be with woodlarks and linnets, I beseech you."

"Mr. Millichamp," said Barbara, "I understand you have been here some time. Pray, how have you managed to exist at Oakwood?"

"I never knew the pleasure of existence till I came to Oakwood," answered Millichamp.

"There is something so incomprehensible in that," said Barbara, "that I shall beg you to explain it to me. At present, I feel as if I were about to become a vegetable myself, or at least a stationary post for vegetables to exist upon. I expect to be covered with moss like the ruins of the old abbey, and I look in the glass every day to see if it is not beginning to sprout."

"I know not what strange effects

may be produced by inactivity," said I; "but I do know that books and needles are excellent preventatives."

"What wearisome preventatives of the fatigue of idleness!" exclaimed Barbara. "Indeed, I conceive it possible to be tired even of the specifics themselves. I could not pore over history and plain-work like Margaret Freeman, and ruin my eyes and spoil my complexion; I will, therefore, take Mr. Millichamp for my preceptor, and he shall teach me his method of enjoying the shades of Oakwood. Do you think he learned it from Margaret?"

"Probably," said I; "nobody is better acquainted with Oakwood than Margaret Freeman; no one more capable of discovering its beauties, or communicating the enjoyment of them to others."

"Then Margaret is the grand specific, I find," said Barbara; "but I fear I should suffer the moss to cover my lips before I should feel disposed to apply the remedy."

"If you do not like Miss Freeman," said Charles, "you cannot say that working and reading have ruined her complexion; for it is much finer than that of a certain young lady I know, who reads very little, and never works at all."

"Brotherly kindness, and polished manners!" exclaimed Barbara. "Mr. Millichamp, I enlist you as the champion of my complexion, and you shall have the honour of defending it against the complexions of all the milk-maids and hay-makers of Oakwood. You are the only rational being at Oakwood, and while I stay here, you shall be my knight."

"I am glad you assign me a post without danger," said Millichamp. "The beauty of your complexion cannot be disputed; or I must have entered the lists with a folio for my shield, and a duodecimo for my lance."

"And I am glad that all mankind are not my brothers, as some philosophers have attempted to make us believe: for if they were, I should not obtain one compliment from my fellow-creatures. Mr. Millichamp, the first service I impose upon you is to find your gloves, if you can, and attend me in a walk in the park."

"Pray, Barbara," said my brother, as she was leaving the room, "in what species do you class me, since I am not a rational being?"

"I am a very bad naturalist," said Barbara, "but I do think you are a non-descript."

## LETTER XXVI.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

*Oakwood.*

HABIT, which is invincible in old persons, works wonders in the young; it has already reconciled Barbara to Oakwood. She no longer complains of the length of the day, or wishes for evening, when we sit down to cards: she has found out an employment that never tires—teazing Millichamp. The only time that he can enjoy Margaret's company, without interruption, is before breakfast. I cannot suspect such a girl of being seriously in love; but I am certain her behaviour gives him

serious vexation; and I took the liberty of telling her to-day, that she did not allow him to dispose of his own time.

"I do not think," said she, "that he could employ it better than in my company. He has hitherto only associated with people that have been dead five thousand years; it is high time somebody should bring him acquainted with the living; and, as I have nothing else to do precisely at this moment, I have condescended to instruct him myself."

"His former companions were his own choice, and so, I think, should be his present."

"Do you imagine it possible, that a man of Millichamp's age should not like the society of a pretty young woman, to say no more of her, better than that of an old long-bearded Grecian or Ro-

man, if he had once experienced the difference?"

"Beauty, alone, will never claim the preference of Millichamp."

"My dear ma'am, I shall believe there is something in the air of Oakwood that inspires uncivil speeches. I assure you, I have a great deal to teach my knight of the folio before he has done with them. But perhaps you think he would take instruction better from Margaret Freeman?"

"Every body admires Margaret Freeman; and Millichamp,—who has seen her in the bosom of her family, where every good woman appears to the greatest advantage—who has witnessed a thousand nameless virtues, which never go abroad, and the high estimation in which she is held by those who know her best,—he cannot do otherwise."

"Well, it is astonishing to me that you all discover such miraculous attractions in Margaret Freeman!—a smattering of drawing, and a knack of cutting paper! For the one, I would sooner fall in love with Angelica Kauffman, or any other female painter by profession; and the other is only fit to excite the admiration of papa and mamma when miss comes home from boarding-school at the vacation. Margaret has no animation—no spirit—no variety! If I were a man, I might like to look at her as a piece of still life, but I should be weary of her company in half an hour. Millichamp," continued she, as he entered the room, "you are come in good time; we were talking of you; and Mrs. Oakwood says you are a recreant knight; that you like your books bet-

ter than me, and Margaret Freeman better than your books."

"I know Mrs. Oakwood too well to believe she would tell stories," said Millichamp.

"Then I must tell them, of course," replied Barbara. "However, I will neither be convinced of your infidelity, nor lead you into temptation; so we will say no more about it."

My brother then entered from the library, and said, "Pray, who has the key of one of the book-cases? It is not in the door."

"Not I," said Millichamp; "I have missed it, and searched for it in vain."

"Not I," said I; "for I did not know it was missing."

"Not I," said Barbara; "for I never enter the library."

"Not I," said Charles, who came in as the inquiry was made; "for I am like you, sir; I look into no books but my own."

My brother rang the bell, and ordered the housemaid who cleans the library to be sent into the room.

"Pray," said he, "have you seen the key of the book-case on the left hand as you go into the library?"

"No, sir," replied the girl. "I dusted the library yesterday, and I remarked that the key was not in the door."

"I know very little of you," said my brother; "there are some animals that eat iron, and you may be one. Have you eaten it?"

"No," she said; "she was not one of that sort."

"Then," said my brother, turning to me, "either you or Millichamp

must have it; and I insist upon your emptying your pockets."

"It is lucky for me that I wear pockets," replied I. "If I were a young woman, I should not carry such a proof of my innocence about me." And I spread the contents of them on the table.

"At your command I will empty mine," said Millichamp; "but I have turned them all inside out twice already."

He put his hand in his waistcoat pocket, and, to his own amazement and our diversion, instantly produced the key. The solution of the enigma was easy. He had only changed his waistcoat before he sought for the key, and again before he found it.

"What have you there, Charles?" said I, seeing a roll of paper in his hand.

"A beautiful landscape of Margaret Freeman's," replied he, "which I have run away with to shew you."

My brother unrolled it. "These are the ruins of Fountain's Abbey," said he. "Margaret has drawn them very correctly."

"I should like much to see them," said Millichamp; after he had attentively examined the drawing.

"I should like it of all things," said Barbara. "Now do, my dear Mrs. Oakwood, let us go."

"I have long wished to see Fountain's Abbey," replied I; "but I will not leave Mr. Oakwood again, at present."

"I am sure," said Barbara, "Mr. Oakwood will go with us."

"Try if you can persuade him," said I.

"Now, my dear, dear sir," said she,

"I know you are so good-natured, that you cannot refuse to make us all happy."

"You know very little of me," replied my brother, "or you would know that I am very ill-natured."

"I positively cannot believe it," cried she. "Look at that handsome face, Millichamp, and tell me if you can discover one trait of ill-nature in it. You are not old enough to be ill-natured; I declare I should not take you to be forty."

"If I were under forty," said my brother, "your flattery and your handsome face might gain their point: but I am on the wrong side fifty, and proof against all you can say."

"If handsome faces have lost their power over you, brother," said I, "let me try mine. I should be very glad to see Fountain's Abbey."

"You try your power so seldom," replied my brother, "that when you do try it, it is uncontroulable. You cannot exert your influence in vain; and I will go whenever you please."

"Excellent!" cried Barbara. "I have one consolation, however; though nobody minds me now, *I* may be uncontroulable when I am fifty."

"I am afraid it is very likely, Barbara," said I.

"Well, sister," said my brother; "you are mistress of the revels; when, and how shall we go?"

"To-morrow, if you please," said I; "and suppose you and I go in the chariot, and give Margaret a place with the coachman; we can take her into the carriage if it rains. Charles may drive his sister in his curricle, and Millichamp may ride his own horse."

"My sister will not like the company of one of the irrationals," said Charles; "therefore, with your permission, I shall take Margaret in my curricle."

"Then, Millichamp," said Barbara, "as I know you drive a gig to admiration, having driven Mrs. Oakwood all over the lakes, we will have the gig, and you shall drive me. I will give you a lesson on the propriety of bestowing your attention on present circumstances, and you shall give me some lessons on the art of driving."

"Mr. Charles Oakwood is much better qualified to teach the art of driving than I am," said Millichamp; "therefore you can go in the curricle, and I can take Margaret in the gig."

"I never learn any thing if I have not my own way," said Barbara; "and my way is, to learn to drive a

single horse before I learn to drive a pair; besides, you want the lesson on propriety."

"Barbara," said Charles, "though I have no objection to your being driven by Millichamp, let me tell you, you choose a very bad instructor, if you wish to drive yourself. Millichamp may drive a gig, but give him a tandem, give him four-in-hand, give him a pair of my chesnuts, you would see how they would puzzle his philosophy. I would bet six to four he dashed his carriage to atoms. If you want to drive in style, I'll teach you when we come back. I'll shew you my chesnuts! Nobody can drive my chesnuts but myself."

"I am afraid," said my brother, "that nature intended thee for a chesnut, and made a mistake when she gave thee arms instead of two fore-

legs. I think thou should'st have neighed instead of talking."

"Thank you, sir," said Charles; "brutified both by sister and uncle; but I won't undervalue my kindred as she does. I hope I have as much of the rational being in me, however, as is commonly given to a coachman. I once drove a pair of fine blood-horses through Wales. I shall never forget what a pleasant party we were:—myself, and three more young fellows. You have no soul, Millichamp, or you would have been delighted with our excursion."

"I have a soul highly susceptible of the beauties of nature," said Millichamp; "and I should have been as much delighted with the Welsh mountains as any of you."

"We did not pay our devotions to the mountains," said Charles; "our

business was to knock down the grouse. But the principal gratification I wished you to partake of, was a dinner we had at Aberystwith."

"I am so much a stranger to modern systems," rejoined Millichamp, "that I did not know a soul was requisite to the relishing a dinner."

"That is a secret your books have never taught you," said Charles; "but I'll tell you how it was. We bespoke every thing in the house—it certainly was a good dinner, and we ate like sportsmen—but that was not the best of it. We turned the waiter out of the room, and suffered nobody to wait but our own fellows; we dispatched all the pigeons out of a grand pye, filled the dish with fragments of ducks and chickens, fish and lobster-sauce, mutton chops and plumb-pudding, and then placed the crust on again. We

ate half the fruit of the tarts, mixed the remainder with pepper and salt, mustard and vinegar, and, putting the lids on, we sent them out, as well as the pigeon pye, to all appearance untouched. We then rang for the waiter, and wrapping every dish and plate, glass and decanter, in the table-cloth, we dashed them on the floor before his face, and ordered our bill. Now, I think that was a flight beyond the ancients. Was not it?"

"Beyond any thing I ever read of, ancient or modern," replied Millichamp.

"You not only soared above history," said my brother, "but above reason and common sense."

"O! it was a capital joke," said Charles. "I believe we laughed for twenty miles, to think how the next travellers would look when they opened

the pigeon pye and tasted the tarts! And an excellent part of the story was, that, though the poor devils of the inn made their own charge, they would be in a little perplexity; for they had hardly a plate or a glass left in the house, and must send to Shrewsbury before they could procure a new stock!"

"I am afraid, Charles," said I, "that you will find the present party very insipid; you will have no opportunity of displaying your wit in our excursion."

"Not at all insipid, I assure you," said Charles; "the company of ladies is more interesting than my wit and wisdom put together; and so I will take the landscape back to Margaret, and ask her if she will trust herself in my curricle. I wonder, sir," continued he, addressing my brother, "that

you do not lend her some of your fine prints to copy; she would make charming drawings from them."

"I believe she might," said my brother; "but I should wonder more if I gave her the opportunity; and I have often wondered at the facility with which many persons ask favours that it is extremely painful either to grant or to deny. Such is that of borrowing books. In general, I have refused to lend them: but to refuse is so unpleasant, that I have sometimes lent books, and even books of great value."

"I had rather wait till a favour be offered, than ask it," said I; "and, in general, one's desires are so well understood, that it will be voluntarily acceded, if it be not disagreeable to the person who has the power to bestow it."

"Yes," said my brother, "let people wait till I offer my books, which they may be assured will not be in this world. Instead of that, a lady of very high rank, with whom I had a slight acquaintance, made no difficulty of asking to borrow a very costly volume of portraits for her milliner to copy some of the head-dresses. It would have been an irksome task to say, 'I will not oblige you, though you know I can;' for such would have been the meaning of a refusal, whatever were the words: I therefore lent them. At the end of three months, I ventured to send for my portraits; the lady returned them; but she was so much offended at my presuming to ask for them, that she would never speak to me more. Another time, my physician borrowed my folio edition of Shakespeare of 1623, to copy half a

dozen leaves which were wanting in his. He had cured me of all my disorders; and, at last, he cured me of lending books. With much difficulty I got my Shakespeare again; but it had been in so many hands, that it was worse mutilated than his own."

"I have often been surprised," said Millichamp, "that a man who would shudder at the idea of picking your pocket, should make no scruple of borrowing your book and never returning it."

"Though that man might scruple to pick your pocket," said my brother, "he would be capable of borrowing your money and never returning it."

## LETTER XXVII.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

*Ripon.*

We are returned hither from our projected excursion to Fountains Abbey, and to-morrow we set out home. We have had a companion we did not expect. When I entered the drawing-room, after writing my last, I found Mr. Goldacre there.

"How do you do, ma'am? I've taken the liberty to come again, ma'am," said he. "Last time I was here you need not thank me for coming; I came a hunting my nephew:

but I was better than bargain; for besides finding him, I found such good welcome and good cheer at Oakwood, that now I'm come o' purpose to see you and your brother, ma'am."

I assured Mr. Goldacre that I was glad to see him; and it was true; for, notwithstanding the man's vulgarity and ignorance, there is something about him I cannot help liking. I have asked myself what it is, and I can fix upon nothing but sincerity. I have a natural antipathy to pretence, call it by what name you will; whether art, hypocrisy, duplicity, disguise, or affectation. I feel its repulsive influence so forcibly, that specious manners, seeming friendship, or even shining talents, will not induce me to mingle with it. But let me see the soul in its natural form, and, if it be not all I could wish,

it is my friend. I apply to sincerity what the proverb does to charity—It covers a multitude of sins.

Millichamp had received his uncle with unfeigned affection.

"But how shall we manage?" said I. "We are all going to-morrow to see the ruins of Fountains Abbey. Perhaps you would like to see them with us?"

"Why, as to ruins, ma'am," answered Mr. Goldacre, "I can't say they're much in my way. I like improving, not going to decay; but, for the sake of good company, I'll make one. Though, perhaps, if this young lady and gentleman are going, they mayn't like to be troubled with such an old fellow as I am."

Barbara assured him that his going would give her infinite satisfaction; and Charles said he was always ex-

tremely happy in the society of any of Mr. Oakwood's friends.

"Then, brother," said I, "we will take the barouche, instead of the chariot, and Mr. Goldacre can go with us."

"I beg your pardon, ma'am," said Mr. Goldacre. "You know I can go in my own carriage, as well as the rest of you; and, as to the expence, I'm sure I shall think nothing of that. No man alive is more generous than I am, or spends his money freer. I never grudge myself any thing I've a mind to have."

By the bye, my friend, this is no uncommon species of generosity.

"We shall make a cavalcade like a lord mayor's shew. I thought, as well as Mrs. Oakwood, that you would have preferred our company on the road to being alone," said my brother.

"Perhaps that young lady will go with me," replied Mr. Goldacre; "and I'm sure I've no objection to making a shew."

"I am excessively mortified that I cannot have a place in your chariot," said Barbara, "because I have engaged your nephew to drive me in the gig; and I dare not disappoint him."

"I would not disappoint him myself," said Goldacre. "My nephew ought to be proud of the honour of driving you."

"I do not always allow him that honour," said Barbara; "I drive him sometimes."

"All fair, too," replied Goldacre. "Give and take. *Let every dog have his day.* I wish he'd mind your driving, ma'am: he never would mine. Well, sir, then," continued he, addressing himself to my brother, "I

believe I must go in your *broushe*, rather than be by myself; though I don't quite know what a *broushe* is; there's so many of them new-fangled carriages starting up, that I can hardly tell one from another."

You will perhaps remark, that I I formerly told you my brother never left Oakwood, and that, in our intended excursion, I have mentioned three of his carriages. Do not suspect my veracity, in either case; this is one of his singularities. He has all sorts of carriages, harnesses, boots, boxes, budgets, and dickies; and never, till now, has taken any of them ten miles from home. It is true, that in his narrow circle, he does both ride and drive; but he had rather walk on foot, and oftener does so.

The next morning, I appointed my brother treasurer, and Goldacre, pur-

veyor to the expedition; and taking the office of secretary upon myself, we set out; Charles and Margaret forming the van, Millichamp and Barbara the centre, and the barouche bringing up the rear.

"My dear brother," said I, as he sat by my side, "do not you find it a charming thing to escape from confinement? Is not it very pleasant to be at large, and ramble about the world?"

"Very charming and pleasant certainly," replied he, "only, if you could sit a little farther off, I should be much obliged to you."

"By all means," said I, giving him a little more room. "I think," added I, "man was never made to vegetate, like a potatoe, always in one place."

"No," said my brother. "We

shall soon be at the end of this stage, and I shall not be sorry to change my place."

"I hope I do not incommode you?" said I.

"O, not at all," answered he. "I suffer no inconvenience from my neighbours; but it seems very odd to be trussed up, for so long a time, in this narrow space."

"Have not you sufficient variety in the scenes which succeed each other?" said I: "dale and mountain, wood and river? If your limbs be confined in a smaller space, your eye ranges over a multitude of objects, instead of a perpetual repetition of the same, as at Oakwood. What, for instance, can be more enchanting than this view as we descend the fell? that fertile dale below, with the village, the church,

the water, and the bridge; and the mountains rising again immediately behind."

"I am sensible of all their beauties," replied my brother; "but what you call being at large, gives me the idea of imprisonment, for though my eyes take in a wider range than common, I cannot stretch my legs. However, I have just thought of a way that will set me at liberty. I'll walk. Here! John! Stop! I'll get out. We are only four miles," continued he, "from the place where we are to dine, and I shall be in very soon after you."

"Very surprising indeed," cried Goldacre, "that a gentleman should choose to walk, rather than ride in his own carriage! I hope Mr. Oakwood does not expect me to walk with him for company. I am used to sit with my legs

under a desk, for half a day together, and they never think of stretching."

Goldacre, however, consumed more time in eating, than my brother did in walking. We travelled at our ease; and it was not till our second dinner, that we reached the pretty little town of Ripon.

Somebody says, I think it is Holcroft, that you may form an opinion of the character of a nation, from the bills which are pasted on the walls. By this rule I oberved, that we were gamblers and soldiers. The lottery holds out irresistible temptations to grow rich, at the corner of every street; and there are not fewer offers of honour, glory, and eleven guineas, to all aspiring heroes, who will only just sacrifice their liberty, and risque their lives, in the army.

A handsome obelisk, erected at the expence of Mr Aislabie, to commemorate his having represented that borough in Parliament sixty years, adorns the centre of the market-place at Ripon. As we were sitting after dinner, "Pray," said Goldacre, "what may be the meaning of them gilt things, at top of that pillar?"

"They are the town arms," said my my brother; "a bugle horn, and the rowel of a spur."

"Then I suppose the man that built the town," said Goldacre, "was a post; such as used to blow their horns and spur their nags, before mail-coaches was invented. Though that was a poor trade too; I don't see how he could get money enough to build a town, unless he robbed his own mail."

"Ripon," rejoined my brother, "was formerly so famous for the manufacture

of fine steel spurs, that they became proverbial. It is said the corporation presented a pair of spurs to James the first, which, even at that time, cost five pounds. Possibly the rowel may allude to this manufacture."

"They've a famous manufactory yet," said Goldacre, "but it is of cream cheeses. In all my life I never ate such; they melt in one's mouth like a lump of butter. I've been out to ask our landlord where they are to be had, and he says there's only one dairy makes 'em, and he takes 'em all. I've bid him pack me up a dozen, to carry to Oakwood."

"They deserve your commendation," said I; "they are like consolidated cream: but the whole country is rich; the crops of turnips are as extraordinary as the cheeses."

"I think our inn is as extraordinary

as either," said Charles: "I should not not have expected a house like this, in such an obscure corner of the world."

"It is not so obscure as you imagine," said my brother. "It is only eleven miles from Harrowgate; and crowds are daily coming from thence, during the season, to see Studley, and dine at Ripon."

In the afternoon we went to see the minster; but that of York was so strongly impressed upon my mind, that I viewed this with indifference, perhaps more than it deserved. Its spire, which was forty yards in height, fell down, in the reign of Charles the second. We were asked to see St. Wilfrid's Needle, a celebrated narrow passage, in a vault, formerly of great use in ascertaining the chastity of females. If a woman had always walked uprightly, she walked with ease through the needle.

If ever she had made a false step, she infallibly stuck by the way. Her size and shape were out of the question.—Why such a wonderful test of virtue should be now laid aside, I know not; perhaps the chastity of women may be either no longer suspected, or no longer considered of consequence. We did not see the needle. In my younger days I have penetrated to the far end of Castleton and Pool's Holes, in Derbyshire; but I have done with subterranean wonders; all I see in future must be above ground.

I spent the evening with an extraordinary woman here, whom I had met with at the house of a friend in London. This lady has a husband, four children, and four servants; and her family is in the exactest order. She makes all her own clothes, and those of her children; her drawing-room is furnished with her

own needle-work; she has large dinner parties, and her most admired dishes are of her own making. These are the common occupations of women; but besides these, she is an authoress, a poetess, an actress, and keeps up a very extensive correspondence. I asked her by what magic she performed so much. She said that nothing was more easy; and every one might do it, if they pleased; that her grand secret was only to rise early, and never leave a moment unemployed: that when she had finished one thing, she never lost time in considering what was to be done next; but had another in her mind, which she set about immediately.—What pity that such a woman should be tinctured, as she is, with vanity, affectation, and romance! I have all my life practised her secret, without knowing it, and great have been my

reading, writing, and needle-work; but to accomplish all she does, strength of body is requisite: she is a large, stout Scotchwoman.

After supper, we left the gentlemen at table, and the lady took me into her drawing-room, where she ordered away the lights, and threw open a sash. We sat at the window, admiring the moon, which shone in all its splendor, and the sky, bespangled with ten thousand stars; when she rang for a pipe, and began to smoke. I expressed some surprise. She told me that she smoked to procure sleep; and that when she was visiting in families where she could not conveniently use tobacco, she took a dose of opium; for her spirits were so lively and volatile, that, without one or the other, she never could feel the least symptom of drowsiness. A shocking habit! little better than getting

intoxicated, to drown care. She should have submitted to her uneasy watchfulness, till weary nature had furnished repose.

This morning we visited Fountains Abbey, which stands in Studley park, about three miles from hence. I stood motionless with astonishment, when, at the end of a narrow grassy glen, with high rocks and woods on each side, the east end of the Abbey church burst upon us; and, through its lofty pointed window, we saw a nave 351 feet in length, where broken arches and spreading trees were striving for the mastery. This space has been divided in length into church and choir; in breadth, into middle and side aisles. Magnificent pillars still remain.

I have never seen any place which gave me so perfect an idea of the manner of living of monks, as Fountains

Abbey, where one may trace them through the day. The splendid ruin I have been describing, was the place where they transacted the business of their lives. I had almost said their work-shop; for prayers and praises so often repeated must have become mechanical. We next see their refectory, 130 feet by 47.—Another serious business was transacted here. I could fancy the long tables, the heavy benches, the eager monks, and the excellent fare supplied by this luxuriant country. Here I could not doubt the zeal of the good fathers; for habit could not render them indifferent to this employ. We then come to a venerable cloister; the scene of their walks, or rather lounges; for such pious men had always leisure.—From this, we mounted by a flight of steps, on the outside, to their dormitory,

which is over the cloister. I had not so good an opinion of their lodging as their living. There are about ten small recesses on either side the room, with each a dismal window; they were probably wainscoted out from the gallery, which runs in the middle. A larger square room occupies one end. Last scene of this *not* eventful history, behold their tombs! at least, those of their abbots. They lie buried in the chapter-house, which is scattered with broken tiles, formerly the pavement; and broken glass which filled the window.

The kitchen, which is 47 feet by 21, remains entire, with its arched ribbed roof, and two capacious fire-places. The very chimney of one is whole, square at the base, and circular at top; and the mill still grinds corn, which supplied the bread. I looked for the but-

tery, where Henry Jenkins shared the hospitality of the monks; but could not find it.

Fountains Abbey was erected in the thirteenth century.

Mr. Aislabie, the late proprietor, bought the estate of Studley in 1766, and inclosed the abbey in his park.—He has been censured for his *improvements*. I, who never saw what it was, admire it as it is. But woe to that sacrilegious hand which dares to touch cathedral, castle, or abbey! They are a race that will shortly become extinct, and nothing shall succeed them! If we cannot make them, let us not alter, or destroy.

It is said, that one of Mr. Aislabie's *improvements* was to take down some of the ruined offices, perhaps the buttery for one; another of them to remove the broken stones from the area

of the church, dig it over, and lay it level; a third, to transform a court between the church and the refectory into a flower-garden. We saw a smart trim juniper growing in the middle of the nave, and the gardener boasted that this was one of his improvements. When I think of these things, I have but one comfort; if these interesting ruins had not been inclosed in the park, they might have suffered as much from plunderers, as they have done from a mistaken attempt to mend them; and the remains of the buttery might have raised a cottage over the head of a thief.

## LETTER XXVIII.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

*Oakwood.*

"How proud should I be," said my brother, when we had returned to the inn at Ripon, "to inclose Fountains Abbey in my own grounds! I should guard it with a more religious care than ever the monks did!"

"Give me," said Millichamp, with enthusiasm, "a wife, a friend, a book, and a cottage in the dale of Fountains Abbey, and I ask no more in this world!"

"More fool you, then, for asking so little," cried Goldacre: "give me

the abbey, and I'd pull down every rotten arch of it to the ground, and build a handsome manufactory, with fifteen windows on a row, and three stories high. That pretty little stream would supply all the works."

"I am very glad, however," said Barbara to Millichamp, "that you take a wife into your scheme of happiness. I never heard you acknowledge so much before."

Margaret looked as if she had heard him acknowledge it.

"And pray, Charles," said I, "what would you do with the abbey?"

"Run away from it," replied he: "I should sleep with the old abbots, in three days, if I did not."

"Well, Millichamp," said I; "if you will choose the cottage and the book, and let me choose the wife, I will be the friend."

"I dare take you at your word," said Millichamp.

"Then, Millichamp," said my brother, "enlarge your plan, and take two friends; for I will sometimes make one."

"Now, my dear ma'am," said Barbara, "it rests with you to name the wife."

"I shall give my apple, not 'to the fairest,' but to *the best*," answered I; "and I shall take time to consider of it."

"If you give it to either, you must trundle it to Miss Oakwood," said Goldacre.

"I wish," said she, "your nephew had half your taste and politeness. I am afraid I must give him up as incorrigible.

"Thank you, ma'am; I wish he had, ma'am," answered Goldacre: "he has

all sorts of sense but common sense; and his taste is all for them Greek and Latin authors; and I take it, they don't teach much politeness. Only think of his ungenteel notions! Here, he asks but for a shabby cottage, and perhaps a humble wife; I won't say any thing against his friends, because they're a credit to him, and books may be well enough when a man has nothing to do but read 'em; when he might have a fine estate, a fine house, and, perhaps, some fine young lady, into the bargain! But don't give him up, ma'am. He *is* good-tempered; and who knows? If you can't conquer him, nobody can."

Barbara well knows how to appreciate a fine estate and a fine house, and might possibly imagine she was a fine young lady.

The next morning we set out on our return to Oakwood, by a different route

from that by which we went. We passed the house and grounds of an old maid, which delighted my eyes.—Her woods were cut through in different directions, in straight lines, it is true, and therefore not conformable to modern ideas of beauty; but the alleys were covered with the finest turf, and so broad, that they looked like lawns. They were kept with the most scrupulous neatness, and inhabited by hundreds of hares. The lady never suffers any to be destroyed on her own domain; and we saw them gamboling about, in conscious security, only separated from us by a sunk fence.—Some gazed at us as we passed; while others pursued their sports or avocations, visited their neighbours, or chatted in parties of half a dozen with those they met, and did not honour us with a look. How I should rejoice

to afford protection to such persecuted and innocent animals! Like Cowper, to become acquainted with them!

This day's journey passed off happily, like all the preceding. The next, when when we were within ten miles of home, as we were travelling along the side of a mountain, we saw Charles Oakwood's horses set off at a great rate, and himself vainly endeavouring to stop them. There was no fence on the falling side, and they had only to go one step too near the edge, to plunge their master and Margaret down the precipice. What were our feelings! We durst not follow, lest the noise of the pursuit should augment the speed of the horses. Millichamp had presence of mind enough to give his reins to Barbara, and call a servant to her assistance, when he jumped out of

the gig, and ran after them, with the swiftness of an arrow.

We saw the horses on the brink of the precipice; when, providentially, the wheel went over a large stone, and the violence of the shock threw Charles and Margaret out, on the other side. No longer in fear of doing mischief, we hastened to the spot; and found Margaret senseless in the arms of Millichamp, and Charles lying on the ground. The horses were going on, dashing the curricle to pieces. We thanked God we saw no blood. Charles soon recovered, being only stunned by the fall; Margaret did not; and Millichamp, who would not suffer any body to share his burthen, carried her to a house in the valley below. My brother dispatched a servant to the nearest town for a surgeon, and we all attended her.

The mistress of the house, in whom I recognised an old acquaintance, had seen the accident, and she met us at the door. She conducted us into a parlour, where Millichamp placed Margaret on a sopha, and sat down by her, holding her hand, with all his anxiety painted in his face. Barbara seemed bursting with vexation. Margaret opened her eyes, cast a vacant look round her, and closed them again. We obliged her to swallow a little cold water, which she did, without speaking; it revived her, and, as soon as a bed could be prepared, she was carried up stairs, and put into it.

We waited the arrival of the surgeon with an anxiety which lasted two hours. At the end of that time he came, and, having examined his patient, assured us all was well. Externally she had received no other hurt than a few

bruises; but he thought it proper to bleed her, and keep her quiet for two or three days. Millichamp waited for the tidings with agony, and received them with silent thankfulness. Charles had appeared truly sorry for the accident, and more on Margaret's account than his own; he now participated in our satisfaction. Even Goldacre rejoiced; and plainly evinced that he did not wish to get rid of the humble wife, at the expence of her having a broken neck. Barbara alone was discontented. I thought she looked malignant, and was now convinced that she had serious designs upon Millichamp, which the undisguised interest he took in Margaret's welfare must completely frustrate.

My brother undertook to inform John and Mrs. Freeman of the accident which had happened to their

daughter, and Millichamp begged permission to ride over in the morning to inquire after her.

"Barbara," said I, "will you go with the gentlemen to Oakwood, or remain here with me?"

"I shall go to Oakwood, ma'am, if you please," replied she. "I think one of the family may be enough to attend upon Margaret Freeman." I fear Barbara will injure Millichamp with his uncle.

The next morning Margaret was sufficiently recovered to come down to breakfast. Her father had walked from Oakwood, and was waiting to see her; Millichamp arrived soon after, bringing the mother in the gig; and they all spent the day with us. We gave Margaret another night's repose; and, on the evening of the following day, my brother sent the chariot for us, and

we took leave of the hospitable Mrs. Spencer, with many thanks.

I found Mrs. Spencer standing on the highest pinnacle of human happiness; blessed with an indulgent husband, and surrounded by a family of grown-up sons and daughters. I had much pleasure in renewing my acquaintance with her, and recalling to mind the amusements and events of our youth. Her father was the vicar of our neighbouring little market-town; her mother, the sister of Sir Hugh Colwyn, a baronet of the true irascible Welsh breed; and she, with her cousin, Miss Colwyn, who was younger than ourselves, had frequently been my visitors at Oakwood Hall before I left it.

Very different had been the lot of poor Miss Colwyn from that of her cousin. I had met with her accident-

ally at Bath, nine years ago, and renewed our former intimacy. I found her married; but without a family. Her husband, Mr. Lewelyn, a younger brother of profligate character, was repaying her sincere attachment to him with neglect, and sometimes with insolence. His attachment had been to the Colwyn estate, which, after a long chancery suit, had been divided between her and her sister, the only children of their late father. I inquired after this lady. Mrs. Spencer told me that she now resides with her husband in South Wales; and that her mother, who is still living in the family mansion, is her neighbour. Mrs. Lewelyn is extremely miserable. She not only endures the pangs of slighted love, but jealousy, too surely founded, operating on a violent disposition little accustomed to controul, throws her into pa-

roxysms approaching to madness; and, in these, her husband has so far forgotten himself as to beat her: she has jumped out of bed to avoid his blows.

Such are the extremes of wedlock! If middle states are best, as wise men have agreed, I may be content with the single one.

Mrs. Lewelyn was brought up in an unfortunate school for a wife. Her father took delight in putting her into a passion for the sake of the amusement that her anger afforded him. What a monster! to find a pleasure in exciting fury in the breast of a fellow-creature; and that creature his own child! He often tried the experiment on his wife; but she was more than a match for him at his own weapons, and never suffered herself to be put out of temper.

Mrs. Spencer has frequently been at table with Sir Hugh and Lady Colwyn,

and heard her ladyship say the most provoking things imaginable to him with the greatest coolness; till he could endure them no longer, and has snatched up a tankard, or whatever stood next to him, and flung it at her head. She never moved a hair's-breadth to avoid it; but, having received the blow, she has taken out her pocket-handkerchief with great composure, and applied it to her face streaming with blood. She would remain at table during the repast, without making him any reproach, or deigning to take the smallest notice of what had happened; and would say, "Sir Hugh, shall I send you a little more," of whatever dish stood before her. When the cloth was drawn, she would retire; and when she entered the family apartment again, would shew no remembrance of the injury she had sustained, by her words, though Mrs. Spencer still

saw malice in her heart; and says, that she only waited another opportunity to provoke the same treatment.

Lady Colwyn is still a fine woman, though her face is covered with scars, from the repeated wounds she has received. Though Sir Hugh Colwyn took the liberty of behaving ill to his lady himself, it was a privilege he would never grant to any other person. Mrs. Spencer was once at their house at Christmas, which was then a season of great festivity in Wales. Lady Colwyn was confined to her chamber with a rheumatic fever. The guests arrived; the eating, drinking, harping, and dancing, went on the same as if she had been at the head of them; but he insisted upon his daughters visiting their mother once every day, and never failed to inquire if they had performed that duty.

It happened one evening, when he

met the young ladies in their mother's apartment, that he took occasion to blame his lady for something she had done which he did not like, and he told her it was very wrong.

"Very wrong, indeed, sir!" cried Miss Ellen, the youngest daughter, joining in her father's opinion.

"You think so, do you?" demanded he.

"Certainly, I do," she replied.

"Why, then, I must tell you, Miss Ellen," said he, "if I find fault with my wife, you shall not find fault with your mother." And without further ceremony he drove her to the top of the stairs, and fairly kicked her to the bottom. The stairs came into a large hall, which was now filled with company, and the young lady came rolling down among them, to their great astonishment, and her own dismay. She

escaped with a few bruises; but her dancing was prevented for the night.

During the law-suit, Lady Colwyn had only a small annuity, granted by the lord chancellor out of the estate; and, though she allowed herself but two domestics, a man and a woman, she was obliged to contract debts which she could not pay, and she lived in perpetual fear of her creditors. Now her income is ample, her establishment is the same. Her servants have married; and when they wish to have the house for their own purposes, they pretend to see a dun at the gate, and their lady orders herself to be put to-bed immediately, and lies quietly the whole day, without giving them any disturbance. At some times, Mary is a great favourite; at others, her lady will revile and curse her in the most unlimited manner, and with the greatest solemnity.

In either case, Lady Colwyn never forgets her dignity. She has high notions of her own consequence; though she has ceased to possess or command any thing. Her servants would, doubtless, take the management of her pecuniary affairs, if her son-in-law were not so near; as it is, he kindly takes care of her whole revenue, and her ladyship lives upon less than half. Mrs. Spencer mimicked the lofty manner and dignified tone of voice of Lady Colwyn; and, while I heard her quick transitions from good sense and good breeding, to the grossest cursing and swearing, I listened with astonishment, and shook with laughter.

I give you these anecdotes on the authority of Mrs. Spencer; but I dare answer for their truth myself. Besides my knowledge of her veracity, they carry internal evidence of their reality

in their extravagance. It is such, that the most eccentric genius could not have invented them. If the Colwyn family were not exceptions to the rest of the Welsh gentry, you would pronounce them far behind the English in civilization.

## LETTER XXIX.

TO MISS CARADINE, OATLEY MANOR.

*Oakwood.*

After a long ramble on your part, and a long silence on mine, I again address you, my dear Maria. Mrs. Oakwood and Millichamp returned from Arrowby Lodge three days after I left you; and I took the opportunity, when I could no longer be favoured with the society of one friend, nor yet attain that of the others, to dine with a lady who, as the world thinks, has honoured me with her notice. My visits to Oatley Manor and Oakwood Hall are my highest pleasure; this was a duty; and

I felt, when it was over, as if I had discharged a debt. I believe that, if ever I am married, I shall keep very little of what is called company.

Mrs. Sylvester, of Rockcliff, is always talking, and never says any thing; she has words without ideas. Her eldest daughter has a fine face; but she is disgusting by her affectation. With her, nothing is indifferent, nothing small; all is vast, amazing, delightful, or shocking! Our shoulder of lamb, at dinner, was elegant; and once, when she unpacked a travelling trunk, and saw that her clothes had got wet, it was awful! Of the youngest daughter I can say nothing; because she said nothing. She was a well-dressed statue. The son arrived in the afternoon upon a smoking horse, and with a broken bridle. He will one day die by breaking his neck. He swore

a little; talked much of horses and dogs; said he was in the fields every day, hunting, shooting, coursing, or fishing; that he seldom went to church, and did not care if he never entered one more. In short, he is a rural madman. His breeding is worthy of the rest; he told us that he was at the race-ball last week; and having paid half-a-crown for tea, for himself and his partner, he was determined to have as much for his money as would *scald a sow*, and that he actually drank *seventeen dishes* for his own share. It is extravagance to waste one's time with such people. If I could not say, with Titus, I had lost a day, I might safely say I had lost more than half one.

I knew the day that Mrs. Oakwood and Millichamp were expected, and I counted the hours when they were more than threescore. I was sitting in my

rustic hut, in the garden, ornamenting a purse I had been making for Millichamp, and knowing that they were not to arrive till evening, when I heard a step advancing from behind, and he stood before me. I sprang to meet him. He acknowledged that moment overpaid all the evils of his past life, and my heart made the responses. In his eagerness to see me, he had quitted Mrs. Oakwood early in the morning, and taken his own horse from her servant.

That day, and the next, I shared with those I love best. Only my dear Maria was wanting to say *all* I love best. At night, the

> "Intermeddling strangers came
> To spoil our heartfelt joys."

Mr. Charles Oakwood, the heir of his worthy uncle, and Miss Oakwood, his

sister, came on a visit to the Hall. The lady had never been there before; the gentlemen several times; but I had happened to be from home.

Miss Oakwood is very beautiful; but her manners are bold and daring. If they are fashionable, heaven defend me from such a fashion! She openly attacks Millichamp; makes him drive her, walk with her, wait upon her, and, as the song says, "puts him in fear of his life." She does not give me one jealous thought; to make him love her is beyond her power, for his soul revolts against such want of delicacy. Me she treats with unconcealed contempt. Her esteem would give me little pleasure; but her insults give me pain. I have not learned to look upon the good opinion of any one of my fellow-creatures with indifference; and I have made it my endeavour so to behave, as to deserve it

of all. I have visited Mrs. Oakwood as usual, which was the highest proof I could give her of my love and veneration. If I did not think of her, and feel for her, as I do, I would not have exposed myself to the ungenerous treatment of her niece.

The nephew gives me yet greater uneasiness. There is more design in his behaviour than I should have expected from a gay young man, of no great depth of understanding. He visits me at home, and at those times when he is sure not to meet Mrs. Oakwood or Millichamp. He makes violent love to me, when we are alone; which is as often as he, and as seldom as I, can contrive it; but, before Mr. and Mrs. Oakwood and Millichamp he is so guarded, that they have no suspicion of it. My father and mother have; and my father has given me some dis-

tant hints in favour of his family and fortune. Mr. Charles Oakwood has penetration enough to discover that he has a rival in Millichamp; but here it ends; for he seems to imagine him a rival not to be feared. In all his love he never hints at marriage; probably his passion may not carry him so far; or he may reserve that temptation, in case smaller ones should not be sufficient. As he pleases, I would not be his wife, if he had an empire to lay at my feet. Of the two, I had rather he should court me for his mistress; as that would excite my father's indignation, while the other might gain his support.

Mr. and Mrs. Oakwood have made me their companion in an excursion to Fountains Abbey. Had it been with them and Millichamp only, what a gratification! But Charles chose to

drive me in his curricle, and Miss Oakwood insisted upon being driven by Mr. Millichamp; never making it any part of their consideration, whether he or I were pleased.

Mr. Charles Oakwood prides himself on his coachmanship; but he gave a dreadful proof of his skill, in suffering his horses to run away with the curricle, and dash us out of it. Neither he nor they received any injury. I was conveyed, insensible, to a neighbouring house, but little hurt; and the tender anxiety of Millichamp, and maternal attention of Mrs. Oakwood, more than repaid me for what I suffered. Even Mr. Goldacre, who went with us, and who is still at the hall, seemed concerned for me. Miss Oakwood pays her court to him, and has his good wishes with regard to his nephew; but he has no ill wishes for me.

A remaining weakness, occasioned by the shock, and by being bled, is my excuse to stay at home. Mrs. Oakwood and Millichamp pass some time with me every day, and I see Mr. Charles when I cannot shun him; but I have altogether escaped the company of Miss Oakwood since the accident, and her comments on the behaviour of Millichamp.

## LETTER XXX.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

*Oakwood.*

"CHARLES," said my brother, some days after our return from Fountains Abbey, "you made a false estimate of your talents in the government of chesnuts."

"Confound 'em," said he, "I knew they were hot; but they never played me such a trick as that before."

"That I can easily imagine," returned my brother; "and probably they will not again. Once is more than enough."

"I shall put the second time out of

their power," said Charles; "for I mean to send George with them to-morrow, to the dealer, and bid him send me down a pair more temperate; and they must bring another curricle, too."

"I suppose you will find the horses of as little value to the dealer, as the black letter books were to the book-seller," said my brother.

"I suppose so," said Charles: "however, I am glad it is no worse. They might have dashed Margaret Freeman to pieces."

"They have given you an opportunity to shew your disinterestedness," said his sister. "All your concern was for Margaret Freeman; you never thought of yourself. And they have rendered Mr. Millichamp's politeness as indisputable, who left his horse to

run away with me, that he might stop hers."

"I confess," said Millichamp, "that politeness, alone, must have been forgotten by me at such a moment; but regard for your safety was not, for I gave you the reins, and called a servant to hold your horse."

"And before he could come up, *I* might have been dashed to pieces," replied she; "but nobody would have minded that."

"I'm sure," said Goldacre, "I should have minded it. I should have jumped out of the *broushe* as Richard did out of the gig; only I'm a little heavier, and could not have run quite so fast."

"I should have regarded the intention, not the pace," said Barbara; "and been grateful for your friendship, while

I had applauded your humanity. Your nephew's affection for Margaret has made him forget what he owes to the rest of the world."

"Aye, aye, ma'am, it's too true," answered Goldacre. "It made him forget his uncle. It's 'All for love, or the world well lost.' To be sure, she's a mild pretty sort of a young woman, and I was very sorry to see her pitch out of the curricle; I can't say any thing against her, I must own; but he might look round him and do better; and so he might have done long ago. He'd an offer of a very handsome young lady, with two thousand a-year; only I'm not quite sure whether she would have had him."

"She would not," said Barbara, "if he had ever driven her in a gig, when Margaret was thrown out of a curricle."

"Aye, I've said enough to him about it," replied Mr. Goldacre, "if that would do any good."

"Is it possible, then," returned Barbara, "that Mr. Millichamp can be seriously paying his addresses to Margaret, and with your consent?"

"No, no; they have not my consent yet, whatever they may have," answered he. "They know that well enough."

"It is very fortunate for Margaret, at least, that you are so good-natured. Some men, in your situation, would not be so easily persuaded," said Barbara.

"Why, I always was a fool that way," said Goldacre. "You know you yourself praised my humanity, just now. I can bluster a little; but I never could bear malice in my life. Besides, what could I do? When two

people differ, one must knock under, and he won't."

"It is lucky for Margaret, then, that you will," replied Barbara.

"Miss Oakwood," said Millichamp, with a firmness that made her tremble, "what have I done to deserve this treatment? I acknowledge myself unworthy of your esteem; but how have I provoked your injuries? or why are they directed against an unoffending young woman, who is not here? Am I to stand tamely by, and hear you persuade my uncle to withhold a consent to my happiness which he has allowed me to hope for? Or am I to be exasperated into language unbecoming, when addressed to you, and improper with regard to the family which has honoured me with such kindness?"

Barbara left the room, without answering a word.

"I never saw you so pettish before," said his uncle to Millichamp, when she was gone; "and you need not have been so now; I could choose whether I would mind her or not."

"I hope you will not mind her," said my brother. "It is the revenge of a disappointed woman. She had a fancy for Millichamp before; but she has been determined to have him, since you mentioned the fine house and the fine estate. We must give losers leave to rail."

Millichamp was like Brutus.—

"He, much enforced, shewed a hasty spark,
And straight was cool again."

Barbara was sensible she had overshot her mark; if ever she does Millichamp

a mischief, it must be by other means. When we met at supper, he begged her pardon for his unguarded warmth; she granted it, not ungraciously; and all was good humour. She now treats him with politeness; but her attentions and commands are at an end. It is *Mr.* Millichamp; and he may dispose of his time as he pleases; she directs her battery against the uncle.

"My dear Mr. Goldacre," said Barbara, this morning, "I walk every day till I am weary; for I can get no other exercise. If I did not walk, I might take root in my chair. My brother has no curricle, and I have no luck in gigs; and the business of Mr. Oakwood's carriages is to stand in their coach-houses; do have the goodness to indulge me with an airing in your chariot. It is uncommonly elegant,

and I think it must be remarkably easy."

Now, Barbara, thought I, you have discovered the right clue.

"Ma'am," said Goldacre, "you do me a great deal of honour. I am extremely happy you like my chariot, for I like it myself. I believe it is elegant, for I had it of Hatchett; and it's very much at your service; and I'll go with you myself, if you'll give me leave, ma'am."

"That will add much to the pleasure of the airing," replied Barbara. "I hate to be alone. You must have a great deal of taste, Mr. Goldacre," continued she, "to assemble such beautiful things about you."

"I've a great deal of money, ma'am," said Goldacre, "and that does as well as taste. Money buys other people's

taste. It is *money makes the mare to go.*"

"I admire your liveries as much as your carriage," said Barbara.

"All from London, ma'am; I've every thing from the first people in London," returned Goldacre.

"That waistcoat, too, you have on," said Barbara, "is excessively pretty. I like every thing about you, but that odious white wig. It is between the old style and the new, and dreadfully unbecoming. You are very good-looking, and you would be quite a young man, if you wore a Brutus."

"Why, ma'am," said Goldacre, "I'm not much attached to my wig myself; I can't say I ever much liked my wig; though I've wore it several years, too; and, as to a Brutus, I don't know what it is. I think I've heard my nephew speak of a Greek emperor

of that name; but he must be a devilish clever fellow, if he could make a young man of me. I've too many years over my wig for that. Though, to be sure, I've a good fresh colour still."

"I wonder you never married," said Barbara. "There must have been women enough ready to pull caps for you."

"Why, to tell you the truth, ma'am," answered Goldacre, "I was too busy to mind their caps. They thought me pretty handsome, I believe, and used to come about it, and about it; but I was always thinking of the main chance."

"Then, if a young woman were to go about it now, I suppose her chance would be a small one," said Barbara.

"Why, if I'd a mind to marry now," said Goldacre, "I could afford it better than ever. What I've lost in youth, I've

gained in money; and I've got a partner in my business since I found my nephew would not have it; and I've nothing to do now, but to attend upon the ladies, except just to look into matters now and then, to see they go on right."

"Well," said Barbara, "I'll consider of it as we go along; and if I can think of any one who deserves you, you may depend upon my speaking in your favour."

## LETTER XXXI.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

*Oakwood.*

We have a company of comedians at Oakwood; their theatre, as you may suppose, a barn, and their curtain a blanket. We have been to see them, for our amusement; and Charles patronizes them on the score of charity. My amusement was small. It is an observation I have often heard, that a play either very well or very ill performed is entertaining; for in one case you laugh at the comedy; in the other at the performers. I subscribe only to the former part of the opinion. I

cannot laugh to see a good play degraded; or to see rational beings completely fail in the task they have undertaken.

"I wonder," said I, last night, "that there should be such people as bad players. We all may mistake our talents a little, and may be prone to err on the favourable side; but voluntarily to hold themselves up to public scorn and derision, and be repaid with poverty and even want, is reserved for players alone. What principle in human nature can induce a man to starve as an actor, when he might live comfortably by thrashing in a barn? or a woman as an actress, when she might make a cook or a housemaid?"

"Idleness," said my brother.—"Strutting in a barn is not so laborious as thrashing, and poverty is not felt till it comes."

"I think it probable that vanity may have a share in determining the stage-struck hero," said Millichamp. "He may be able to judge accurately of his talents in thrashing; but not of the impression they may make on an audience by his acting. Derision, like poverty, is not anticipated; and when it is felt, it is too late to retract. The man is spoiled for labour, and habit makes him callous to contempt, though expressed in public, and without reserve."

"The greater the difficulty to retract," said I, "the greater would be the honour."

"But," said my brother, "is it possible? Would you take Lady Teazle as a cook, or recommend Charles Surface to me as a labourer?"

"You puzzle me," answered I. "The first I would not do. I could

not admit a vagabond into my family; though, I think, I should not scruple to employ him in my fields."

"I would not employ them at all," said John Freeman; "and I am sure it is no charity to encourage them as players. It is only encouraging idleness and vanity, which, you justly observed, were the principles that set them a strolling."

"Then you should relieve nobody," said Goldacre; "for nobody's poor, but by their own fault."

"Infancy, old age, and sickness, are exceptions," said my brother. "In other cases, distress is generally the result of laziness or improvidence; but one cannot behold it without commiseration."

"Then my actors have found friends," said Charles; "and I beg we may all take tickets for to-morrow night."

"I never saw a play in my life," said John Freeman, "and never will. I should take no pleasure in any thing which I knew to be false from beginning to end."

"Many of Shakespeare's plays," replied my brother, "are founded on English history, and keep very close to facts."

"I should dislike them worse than the others," said John; "I never read a word of Shakespeare in my life, and I never will; because, if his plays are not all true, they should not pretend to be historical."

"But you, who know history so well," said my brother, "could not be deceived: you would distinguish the inventions of the poet from the truth in a moment; and certainly it would be a gratification to you to see King John, Richard the Third, and Cardinal

Wolsey stand before you, and hear them speak."

"I like no inventions," replied John. "Your poet would make the kings and the cardinal repeat words they never said. I have a perfect idea of them, from what they really said, and, more than that, from what they did. Besides I know their very looks; and if I saw a monarch with a fair complexion, represented by a fellow with a black beard, I should bid him get off the stage."

"Well, sir," said Charles to my brother, "you will go?"

"I have been once to oblige you," said my brother; "but I had rather confine my legs in my own barouche for three hours, than go again; I will take a dozen tickets, however."

"And you, ma'am?" said Charles.

"No," replied I, "I will take half

a dozen; but I shall give them to Anson. Of all the amusements of my youth, the only one I have still a taste for is a play, if it were well performed; but I am not easily pleased. I judge by a very uncommon rule; and I cannot help trying every word and gesture by my standard, at the moment I hear or see it,—Nature. If a performance be not natural, it matters not to me by what name the actor is called; I do not like him. It is true that nature has many modes of expression, and a good actor will find out the best."

"I saw the School for Scandal when it first came out. The characters were all reckoned to be remarkably well supported; I will tell you how they appeared to me. King, in Sir Peter Teazle; Mrs. Abington, in Lady Teazle; Miss Pope, in Mrs. Candour; Yates, in Sir Oliver; and Baddeley, in the Jew; represented

nature in the highest perfection; such as I could have had no conception of. In their whole performance I saw not a fault. Parsons was excellent; but he made hideous contortions to gain applause from the gallery: Dodd was a bundle of affectation that I never could endure: Palmer wanted feeling; and Smith something, perhaps ease, lightness, and a clearer voice."

"After this," said my brother, "I cannot hope that you were ever satisfied."

"I never was satisfied," replied I, "with all the performers in any one play."

"What do you think of Mrs. Siddons?" said Millichamp.

"I saw Mrs. Siddons at a country theatre," answered I, "before she was known to fame. She played alike

tragedy and comedy, and was a good actress, of the middling sort. I saw her seven years after, in London, when the pit was laid into the boxes, and it was the fashion to faint at her performances. The play was Isabella, and the heroine was her first character. I steeled my heart with prejudice; I had seen Mrs. Siddons unmoved; why should I be moved? That was a question I could never answer; but so it was; I wept from the second act to the end of the play, and made myself ill for three days."

"When very young, I had admired majesty and dignity, in white satin and gold fringe; and grief and horror in black velvet and bugles; but from this moment I gave up tragedy; believing the inevitable woes of life sufficient, without seeking others for my amusement."

"Tragedy stands condemned by your own law," said my brother; "it is not natural."

"It does," answered I. "From the time I had formed my criterion, Melpomene was no longer one of my Muses; and if I had not renounced tragedy on account of my feelings, I should have discarded it from judgment. I have only twice seen a tragedy since I saw Isabella, and then only for the sake of seeing Mrs. Siddons; but I chose such tragedies as were not of the melting kind.

"The first was Alexander the Great. Here, thought I, even Mrs. Siddons cannot make me weep, and I shall have the additional gratification of seeing Kemble in Alexander. True, I did not weep; but Mrs. Siddons could not secure the ranting of Statira from my

contempt; and I felt still less complacency for the madman, Alexander."

"I remember it," said my brother; "I was with you; and I thought the death of Alexander a trick worthy of Sadler's Wells. His chair was borne aloft; and he took a flying leap from it, into the arms of half a dozen fellows, who knew exactly what the hero's exit was to be, and extended them ready to receive him."

"I was now satisfied with heroics, as I had been with sorrow," resumed I: "but determined to see Mrs. Siddons once more, I chose an historical play. I saw her in Catherine of Arragon. She appeared to me to mistake the character of the noble and interesting Catherine. Shakespeare has given it dignity and patience; she gave it dignity and rage."

"The players are greater liars than

than the poets!" interrupted John Freeman.

"Some of the attitudes of Mrs. Siddons," continued I, "had an air of study; but I finished, as with Isabella, by heart-rending tears. This, then, is my answer to your question, Millichamp, — 'What do you think of Mrs. Siddons?' That she acts to the heart, rather than to the understanding; that the judgment may discover some faults, but she has an absolute command over the feelings."

"And what," said Millichamp, "is your opinion of Mrs. Jordan? Thalia *is* one of your Muses."

"My remarks are all of the old school," replied I. "It is ten years since I was in London; but I have seen all Mrs. Jordan's characters, up to that time, with pure unmixed

admiration; and I have seen her perform one which no woman ought to attempt, in a manner which no man could equal; I mean Sir Harry Wildair. Mrs. Jordan is nature, in her richest garb."

"Barbara," said Charles, "you will go to see my strollers? you are not quite so difficult to please as Mrs. Oakwood."

"Certainly," answered she. "Tragedy, comedy, or farce, however performed, or murdered, is better than the same thing every day repeated at home. Mr. Goldacre, you will go, of course?"

"To be sure, ma'am; I shall wait upon you with pleasure," said he; "and, perhaps, if the players are very bad, I may be lucky enough not to find it out; and Margaret, if you choose to to go, I will give you a ticket."

"I thank you, sir," replied she. "I

am like my father; I never saw a play in my life."

"Then Margaret," said I, "do not go now. I should be sorry to have you form an idea of such a high species of entertainment from what you would see in a barn at Oakwood."

When we assembled before dinner to-day, Mr. Goldacre was missing. On such an occasion,

> "Sweet William used to be the first;
> But the last of all came he."

At length he entered, with an air of triumph, bowing and smirking to Barbara. "How do you like me now?" said he; and behold! his wig was black! We all burst into a laugh, Barbara among the rest; for it was not in human nature to forbear it. Goldacre looked a little disconcerted.

"Why, it's a Brutus, is n't it?" said he.

"It is, it is a Brutus," answered Barbara, "and one of the most fashionable. It is Mr. *Ross's Acmé of Perfection.* We shall all admire it, when we are a little accustomed to it; but the change is so great, that, at first, we cannot help laughing."

"I think, then, I'd better not have changed at all," said Goldacre; "for you was used to the white wig, and you never laughed at that. I'm not very fond of being laughed at. I thought nothing was wanting but a Brutus to make *me* the acmé of perfection; though I don't know what acmé is, no more than Mr. Ross; but I suppose it's the tip-top: Is n't it, Richard?"

"It is, sir; you could not have defined it better," replied Millichamp.

"Well," said Goldacre to Barbara; "you may choose between the old wig and the new; but, mind, I'll not be made a fool of. What I take to now, I'll stick to. I'll turn my wig no more."

"Then I decide in favour of the new one," said Barbara; "and I shall like you better than ever; both for the improvement it makes in your person, and the proof of your desire to oblige me."

Mr. Goldacre recovered his own good opinion by this civil speech; and Brutus is now escorting my niece to the play.

## LETTER XXXII.

TO MISS CARADINE.

*Oakwood.*

I HAVE taken a bold step, my dear Maria, in hopes to serve you. Knowing the unfortunate situation of Mr. Caradine's affairs, and that they are daily getting worse; knowing that misery stares my friend in the face, if the progress of this alarming evil be not stopped; I have ventured to try my influence over Mr. Goldacre on the subject. My influence over the uncle of Millichamp! what a proud word! I have made it my study to gain this gentleman's favour, by every word and look; and

never yet have I had the mortification to find that charm fail, when it has been applied to mortal man. The reason is obvious; my endeavours to please spring from the heart, and can only be exercised towards those who please me. To Mr. Goldacre I am bound by inclination. Whatever may be his oddities, he is well disposed, and would injure no living creature. But I am actuated by a higher motive; for he is the friend, almost the father, of the man I love; of the man I shall pass my life with; or it will be passed alone, if not shortened. And, if I love Millichamp, shall I not love all who love him? Shall not his friends be my friends, and his duty my duty?

For some time past I have again visited at the Hall; and yesterday, on entering the drawing-room, I found only Mr. Goldacre. "Sir," said I,

"there is a subject lies very near my heart, and I have often thought I would take the liberty of mentioning it to you; will you forgive me if I do it now?"

I suppose he thought of his nephew's attachment to myself; for he replied, "Forgive you! aye; I have forgiven you long ago."

"It is respecting Mr. Caradine, sir," said I. "His daughter and I have grown up together in the strictest bonds of friendship. A very worthy gentleman has paid his addresses to her some time; he has gained her affection, and has not been disapproved by her father; but he is a younger brother, he is in the army, and cannot marry without a fortune; and my friend and I are both afraid that, if Mr. Caradine continue his present way of life, he will add to the incumbrance

on his estate, and not be able to establish her."

"Why, so he will, to be sure," said Mr. Goldacre; "but what can *I* do? I must have interest for my money, and money back, or land instead, for my principal. I want no more than my own."

"I know you do not, sir," said I; "and that has encouraged me to speak. At times, Mr. Caradine laments his own imprudence; though he has not resolution enough to alter his conduct. Perhaps, if you wished to lay your money out in land, rather than let it remain on mortgage, he would sell you one part of his estate, to redeem the other."

"I have no objection to that," answered Mr. Goldacre, "my income would be less, but it would be more substantial; and his would be more,

and it would be clear. But I am afraid it would not last long; he'd mortgage again."

"The jointure of Miss Caradine's mother," said I, "was four hundred pounds a year: that he cannot touch: but do you think he could be prevailed upon to secure the remainder in any way that would put it out of his own power? You might have some influence over him, if you would have the goodness to exert it."

"Why, yes, the man that lends money has generally some influence over him that borrows it," said Mr. Goldacre. "I'll think of it; and if I can serve your friend, I will."

I thanked him sincerely for his kindness, and I hope it will prove successful.

Miss Oakwood now appeared. She treats me as I could wish; that is,

takes very little notice of, but never affronts me. She is now taking Mr. Goldacre, as she attempted to take Mr. Millichamp, by storm. What are her views, or what will be the event, I cannot divine. Love of his person cannot prompt her. Mr. Goldacre is a stout, portly, well-looking man, turned of sixty, respectable in his appearance; but not calculated to seduce the affections of a spirited young woman. Miss Oakwood is either incited by the love of money, or the love of mischief.

Mr. Charles Oakwood pursues me still. I have often wondered how he found me out. At home, in my walks, whenever he is secure from interruption, he appears, and like a troubled ghost, disturbs my repose. I have discovered that his valet watches

me. Mr. Charles Oakwood knows that Millichamp is my accepted lover; but he seems to think that it depends upon himself to supplant him.

The other day, Mr. Charles Oakwood entered our cottage, and finding me alone, he shut the door. "My dear Margaret," said he, "I have caught you, and you cannot escape me. If you knew how much I love you, you would not shun me as you do."

"I have already told you, sir," said I, "that this is a subject particularly disagreeable to me, and that I cannot stay to hear it; if you will choose any other, I shall think myself honoured by the company of the nephew of Mr. and Mrs. Oakwood."

"This employs all my thoughts; then how can I speak on any other subject? You are running in my head

night and day. Margaret, you must and shall be mine, for I cannot live without you."

I rose to go; Mr. Charles Oakwood stepped before me and locked the door. "Very well," said I, returning to my seat, "I am prepared to listen, though I wished to avoid it."

"Now, do tell me," said Mr. Charles, "what objection you can find in your heart to make against me. Am not I a tolerably handsome young fellow?"

"You are more than tolerably, more than commonly, handsome."

"Well, that is one point settled.—I suppose I am more than tolerably rich —Am not I?"

"I believe your fortune is very large."

"And, though I don't study Greek, I suppose my understanding is as good as other people's—is not it?"

"I do not presume to judge of mental faculties, or the merits of Greek."

"And my manners, what have you to say against them? they are frank and open—Are not they?"

"Born and bred in this cottage, it is impossible I can be any judge of manners; but I should be glad if you were more reserved in your communications to me."

"Margaret, your answers are very short, and you assume a degree of ignorance which is not your own. Millichamp believes he loves you, and he has argued you into a belief of it; but if he were lucky enough to obtain you, depend upon it he would soon return to his first love, a huge folio. Your modesty renders you blind to your own merit, or you would despise such an unnatural animal as Millichamp! a

philosopher before his time! A philosopher should have a grey beard. I have no philosophy, but abundance of love; so much love that it would have overset my philosophy if I had ever possessed any. I love you to desperation; that is, to the determination to have you; and I faithfully assure you that you shall command every thing which love and money can bestow, and that it shall be the study of my life to leave you not a wish ungratified. —You are silent, Margaret—Will you not speak? Well, then, it is said that silence gives consent; I will take it, and be satisfied." He then took my hand. I withdrew it hastily, and said, "If my silence is to be so interpreted, I must speak."

"I knew I should make you speak, if it were but to be saucy," said Mr. Oakwood.

"It is contrary to my nature to be saucy, sir. I owe civility to every human creature, and most to those who love me, as you say you do; but love persisted in when it is not returned becomes persecution."

"Then allow me to ask you one question; why do not you return it?"

"There is no end of this. I must answer your question by another; why do you persist in it."

"Because I cannot do otherwise; because your person is lovely and your manner is bewitching, and they compel me to love you, whether I will or no. Now answer my question; why do not you return my love?"

"For your own unanswerable reason; because it is not in my power."

"Proceed. I gave the reasons that

put it out of my power to do otherwise than I did."

"It is easier to tell why one likes, than why one dislikes any person. In the present instance I scarcely know my reasons myself; and if I did, it would be painful to tell them."

"Now, for the soul of me, I cannot believe that you dislike me. Think, my dear Margaret,—all other things passably well,—think what advantages a fine estate has over a miserable pittance, and a whole heart over one which you must share with Homer and Virgil. With Millichamp you might live neglected and unknown; with me, you might dash through the world, a blazing star!"

"I do not desire a fine estate; and dashing and blazing are directly contrary to my habits and disposition."

"But I suppose you will desire to

eat; and you cannot do that with Millichamp, unless the old *wig-block* help to provide the dinner; and I think a very good friend of your's and mine will endeavour to keep his fist shut close."

Mr. Charles Oakwood then went to the door, and, with his hand on the key, said, "I will not keep you a prisoner, Margaret; but remember, I cannot live without you."

Here indeed the advantages of a fine estate are forcibly displayed; and one of them is, that they encourage the possessor to hope, in defiance of the most explicit refusals. With two hundred pounds a year only, I think Mr. Charles Oakwood could not have declared his determination to have me; something, however, depends upon the mind of the man, for with a hundred times that revenue, such a thought

could not have entered the bosom of Millichamp.

But perhaps, my dear Maria, Mr. Charles Oakwood may be a deeper politician than I suspected, and may trust to the kindness of his sister, rather than to his own merit and fortune, to break the engagement between Millichamp and me. He may, however, yet be too shallow; for let us *but* eat, and love will supply the rest.

## LETTER XXXIII.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

*Oakwood.*

THREE days ago, Goldacre went to Mr. Caradine's, and he returned yesterday to dinner.

"I've done that business, however," said he, when he had finished eating.

"What business?" said my brother: "with Mr. Caradine, or the venison pasty?"

"With Mr. Caradine," replied he. "As to the venison pasty, if I see it at supper, I'll have another bout with it."

"And what have you done with Mr. Caradine?" said my brother.

"Why, I've done with him for ever," answered he. "You must know that I wanted to go over, to get two years interest that was due; but the company of the ladies was so very engaging, that I hardly knew how to leave them; and a few days ago, says Margaret to me, 'I wish, sir, you would get one part of the estate for yourself, and get the other out of Mr. Caradine's clutches, for his daughter; for I'm afraid he'll spend it all, if you don't.' So I thought I'd e'en do a good turn; especially as I should be no loser by it; and I set out directly."

"And how have you succeeded?" said my brother.

"Why, pretty well, I think," said Mr. Goldacre; "but you shall hear. 'Mr. Caradine,' says I, as soon as I

saw him, 'we may as well come to business directly. When I was here last, there was above a year and a half's interest due, and you said you'd send it; and now there's two years due, and it's never come; and money makes money, and I must have it.'

"'But how the devil will you have it,' says he, 'if I have not got it.'

"'I have nothing to do with the old lad,' says I; 'I look to you for the money, and the money I'll have.'

"'Well,' says he, 'you shall have it; but pray have a little patience.'

"'Why,' says I, 'the longer I've patience, the deeper you'll be in debt; and I'm come to a resolution. I'll have my interest before I leave this place, or I'll put the matter into my lawyer's hands; and I'll have the principal in six months, and I now give you notice to pay it.'

" 'Mr. Goldacre,' says he, 'what do you mean? You know it is utterly out of my power to pay you. I could as soon raise the dead.'

" 'You must raise the money, however,' says I; 'for have it I must.'

" 'Why,' says he, 'I always took you for a good-natured man. I never expected you would proceed in this hasty manner, and ruin me at once.'

" 'Aye, I used to be reckoned good-natured,' says I; 'but I'm tir'd of it; it costs too much money; and for the rest of my life, I'm determined to be peremptory. Look you, Mr. Caradine, I know your affairs as well as I know my own; and I've managed mine a little better than you have your's; and I'll put you in a way, if you'll hearken to reason. The estate is all measured and valued; you know what you owe me; look over the map; set

aside which part you please, so it lies all together; let me have it by fair bargain and sale; and the rest's your own, without any incumbrance.'

"'But,' says he, 'the land's increased in value since it was surveyed.'

"'That may be,' says I; 'but I suppose it is not increased in measure, and Mr. Thompson can soon look it over again, and what he says, I'll abide by. But,' says I, 'there's another thing. Here, you're hunting yourself out of house and home; and racing, till you won't have a horse to ride on; and I've taken a fancy to your daughter, and I won't see her a beggar. She was to have been my niece; but I'd a stubborn nephew to deal with, that would choose for himself, in spite of all I could say; though I can't say he's made a bad choice, neither; but

that's nothing to the purpose. If I spare you the trouble of the law, and the expence of foreclosing, which, perhaps, would run away with one-third of the estate, I shall insist upon your making over the remainder to your daughter; and you shall only receive the rents and keep the mansion for your life. And now,' says I, 'I've done; I don't like to dally over business.' And I took out my watch, 'It's now twelve o'clock,' says I; 'I'll give you till five to consider of it: if you don't agree to my proposal then, I'll set out for Oakwood; and if you do, you shall send for the lawyer and the surveyor, to be here to-morrow morning early; I'll stay till the next morning; and we'll make a finish of it.' "

"That was indeed peremptory," said my brother. "You know how to dispatch business."

"I believe I do," returned Goldacre. "If I had not known how to dispatch business, you would never have seen my chariot-wheels roll at Oakwood."

"Then we should have missed the most beautiful carriage I ever saw, and the most delightful carriage I ever rode in," said Barbara.

"I'm very glad you think so," replied Goldacre; "and I hope you will take another airing to-morrow morning."

"I can have no objection to that," said Barbara. "But do let us hear the end of your story, about that Mr. Caradine. You managed him very cleverly."

"I think I did," said Goldacre. "Well, I left him, and went into another room; and they brought me a very nice Sandwich, and a bottle of

wine, and a bottle of water; and in about an hour he came.

"'Well,' says he, 'it's no use trifling, as you say; and, since I can do no better, I must e'en consent; but you must give me time. I've a very fine stud of horses, and I've one of the best packs of dogs in Yorkshire; and I must turn 'em into money; and I shall have a great many useless fellows, when these are gone, that must provide themselves places; and all will take time.'

"'Mr. Caradine,' says I, 'you've four hours good yet; but not one minute after five o'clock. And, since you're so wise as to take my advice, I'll give you a little more of it. Men and horses and dogs, are creatures that will soon eat their heads off, and the first loss is the least. Give away your dogs to-morrow, if any body's fool

enough to have them; if not, shoot them. Send your horses to the great fair next Monday, and sell 'em for what they'll bring. Turn off your men with your dogs, and give 'em a month's wages a-piece, except a couple of them, to send with your horses; and then let them follow the rest. Keep only a chariot; if it is not quite so costly as mine, it will do; and keep only one pair of coach-horses, and a couple of saddle-horses, and let your coachman be groom; and keep one footman, and let him be butler; and one gardener, and if he wants help, let him have a labourer; and let your daughter make a reformation among the women, and you'll be a rich man.'

"'And how, Mr. Goldacre,' says he, 'can I spend my time?'

'how must you have spent it,'

I had let you go on? In

a gaol! If I'd been a Jew, I'd have said nothing about it; and when you'd gone the length of your tether, I'd have taken all the estate, except the jointure; and your other creditors would have snapped up the rents of that, and you might have spent your time between four bare walls. Now,' says I, 'you may ride over an estate of better than a thousand a-year, for what I know, and it's as much your own as ever, only you can't spend it. But do as you like,' says I, 'it's no advantage to me. If you pay me my money, I shall put more to it, and lay it out in a better estate.'

"He shook me by the hand. 'Mr. Goldacre,' says he, 'you're a man of honour, and you've saved me from destruction. I will conduct myself entirely by your advice.'

"'That's right,' says I. 'If you

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have not discretion enough to conduct yourself, always take counsel of those that have been successful.'

"Well, to make short of my story, the lawyer and the surveyor came the next morning; we signed and sealed at night, and Miss Caradine called me her preserver, and cried, and was ready to go down on her knees. I was afraid she'd have made a chicken of me."

"Of the true game breed, at least," said my brother; "you shewed that, by your resolution."

"Your dispatch of business," said Millichamp, "makes me ashamed of the inactive life I have chosen. If I could emulate your example, I should almost wish I had trodden the path you marked out for me. Margaret, as well as her friend, will thank you with tears."

"I admire your sensibility as much

as your firmness," said Barbara. "I was always certain that you had a tender heart.'

"You're very kind, ma'am; you're all very kind," said Mr. Goldacre. "I'm not much used to these speeches. I shall hardly know myself, just now. Well, when all was over," continued he, "Mr. Caradine cut the map of the estate in two, and gave me my share. 'There,' says he, 'that sha'n't stare me in the face, however. I'll try to forget it ever was mine; and I'll block up all my windows that look towards that part of the land, that I may not be reminded of it.'"

"Mr. Caradine," said Barbara, "is like a curious old Irish prince, I met with lately in a novel, who turned the back of his house to a beautiful prospect, which once belonged to his fa-

mily; and looked upon a farm-yard, because it was still his own."

"The story I remember well," said I; "though it is more than thirty years since I read it. It pleased me much. Miss Owenson has taken the idea of her Prince of Inismore from the Prince of Coolavin. In the year 1781, I passed several days in a family, where one of the company was a Captain O'Dermot. Struck with the name, I mentioned to him the story; and he acknowledged that he was the son of this prince, I believe the third, the Spanish officer mentioned by Mrs. Griffith in the novel. This gentleman spoke of her with great indignation, and said that she had received many favours from his family, for which her description of his father was a very ungrateful return. He owned that his

father's house had no windows fronting the beautiful country which was his by inheritance; and that he lived in one wing of it, apart from his family; but he said that his father was not the brute and savage represented by Mrs. Griffith; that, in his youth, he had been a man of uncommon parts and vivacity; and that these, when he was soured by disappointment, had been the occasion of his singularities.

"Captain O'Dermot was then forty-two years of age; though he looked older, from the fatigues he had undergone. He was lively, sensible, and well-bred. He had been long in the service of the East India Company; and, on returning to India from a visit to his native country, had been taken by the Spaniards, confined in a Spanish prison, and permitted to come home on his parole. When I knew him, he

Sunday shoes, tied up in bundles, which they exchange, in a house or under a hedge, for the knitted yarn and *clog shoon* they had walked in. Every house in the village, except those of the principal farmers, is a public-house. Every poor person brews malt and roasts beef for the statutes; each hangs out a holly bush at the door, and is allowed to sell beer three days without a licence.

At twelve o'clock we walked down to what is called the statutes yard, that is, a large, square, verdant field, surrounded with spreading oaks; the spire of the village church appearing over them, on one side. The place was crowded with country people of both sexes, drest in their best apparel and best looks; not a discontented face among them. Some were stretched at their ease under the oaks, which, as

the day was extremely hot, afforded a welcome shade. Some were gaping and staring at a couple of itinerant auctioneers, who fleeced them of their money, and gave them in return razors, like those of Peter Pindar, made to sell, not shave, and knives to look at, not to cut. Some were attending a show, to which they were invited by characters so ill written, that a doctor of divinity might have been puzzled to find out their meaning; and those who did not choose to part with two-pence, were listening to the drum, or admiring the antics of the fool, for nothing. Others were at the stalls, of which there were great numbers, buying ribbands or plumb-cakes for their sweethearts, or red silk handkerchiefs for themselves; and not a few had been purchasing ballads, and were employing all their skill in endeavouring to read

them. In one corner, two lads had joined to buy a cake, which they had resolved to keep to themselves; and every time an acquaintance accosted them, they bustled with their waggoner's frocks, to hide it; assumed grave faces and solemn looks, while their mouths were so filled with cake, that they durst not speak. When the intruder was gone, their sides shook with laughter, and mirth made the best part of the feast. The whole seemed an assembly of busy, happy rustics, who had not a thought for to-morrow. On a more particular examination, however, it would be found to contain different classes.

Servants who came to be hired had some care till the grand business was accomplished. Waggoners had whip-cord twisted round their hat crowns, and sometimes formed in diamonds

over them, as a symbol of their profession. Shepherds wore a lock of wool in the hat; and cow-boys and plough-boys, a lock of cow's or horses hair. When any one was hired, the token was taken out, and the gayest ribband that could be found was bought with the earnest money, and tied round the hat in its place. Some rural coxcombs wrapped the ribband two or three times round the hat crown, and tied it in a smart bow. The ribbands are worn through the day, and, at night, given to the sweetheart; or, in default of a sweetheart, to the sister.

The women hang out no sign.—They are only distinguished from those who come merely to be spectators of the shew, by being in a plainer dress; and they do not mix with the gay crowd, till they are sped.

If a farmer's wife like the appearance of a girl, she will walk round her, and view her with as much circumspection as a dealer would examine a horse that he thought of purchasing; and if she be satisfied, she will say, "Do you want a place?" If the girl be provided, she will say, "No;" but will frequently add, "This young woman does," pointing to her companion, and the inquiries are transferred to her. If the girl reply in the affirmative, the mistress proceeds to ask, "Where have you lived? What can you do?" &c. If she receive satisfactory answers, she mentions every sort of business she expects her servant to perform; the bargain is struck; and earnest given. The earnest is generally a shilling; but some servants demand half a crown; and others, having formerly had half a

crown as earnest of a place which proved a bad one, think it unlucky, and will take only a shilling. No character is required on the part of the mistress; and if the girl be afterwards bidden to do any work not mentioned at the time of the contract, she refuses, saying, "I was not hired to do that."

Formerly young women were either so bashful, or so little qualified to regulate the terms on which they should dispose of their services, that their mothers commonly stood at their elbows, and made the bargain for them; they now have skill and confidence enough to make it for themselves.—Their appearance is altered, as well as their manners. A few years ago an honest old farmer, who had been used to good servants, in stuff gowns and black stockings, and had lately had bad ones in cotton, was determined to

take one of the old school. He searched the statutes yard through with great care; but no such thing was to be found.

The time of the new servitude commences on the eleventh of October; but the servant generally stipulates for a certain number of days, never exceeding a week, before liberty is sacrificed for the rest of the year. If, in the interval betweeen hiring and going to a place, the master, by chance, hear a very bad character of the servant, or the servant of his future situation; the one will forfeit the earnest money, or the other carry it back, and the agreement is void; but this very rarely happens. If the servant enter on his place, he is bound for the year. If he wish to quit it, "You shall either serve me or Bridewell," is the word.

The doors of our servants' hall were

thrown open on this day of rejoicing, and a table stood the whole length of the room, furnished, it is true, with neither knives and forks nor plates; but, to make amends, each end supported a cold roasted surloin of beef; next to each of these stood a large two-handed basket, filled with slices of bread; and the centre was crowned with two vast flaggons of strong beer. These were replenished as often as emptied, and were surrounded by a number of horns, holding more than half a pint. Every person who came was served with a slice of beef and bread, and a horn of beer, twice if required.

Mrs. Simpson had an elegant cold collation in her room, for visitors of a better sort.

At six o'clock, the doors of the servants' hall were shut, the tables

taken away, rows of benches added, and the room was put in order, and lighted up. The doors were then opened again, and the housekeeper and butler received the company, which consisted of the tenants and their families, with their friends and visitors; and the young people set to dancing. An adjoining room was opened for refreshments; not for lemonade, iced creams, and macaroons; but for solid hams and tongues, chickens and turkeys, cheesecakes, custards, rich cake, and cold plumb-puddings; and these were washed down with red port, negus, and strong beer. In the housekeeper's room were four card-tables; and in an outbuilding, pipes and tobacco, which my brother never suffers to enter his house.

After our supper, we joined the

company in the ball-room, and Barbara commanded Mr. Goldacre to dance with her. He excused himself for some time. "It's so long since I danced," said he, "that I've forgot my steps; you'd better take my nephew."

"I like you better than your nephew," answered she. "He would leave me in the middle of a dance, and forget that he was my partner. I'll have you, and you alone."

"If I was a little younger," said Goldacre, "I might be for taking a lady at her word; and, as it is, take care you don't say too much."

"I shall say nothing to repent of," replied Barbara; "so put on your gloves; for I cannot keep my feet still."

"Well, since I must take a hop," said Goldacre, "I'll do my best; but I'm not quite so light as I was ten years

ago; and if I lag a little, you must forgive me."

Poor Goldacre kept his word in doing his best; and, determined to shew his activity, he did more than enough. The unmerciful Barbara made him caper, till, like Falstaff, he larded the lean earth; and I sat in fear of seeing him take his wig off, and wipe his bare head with his handkerchief. At length he begged for quarter. He followed her to a seat, and puffing and panting, said, "I think I've done pretty well, considering."

"You have performed incomparably," replied Barbara; "and when you have gone down half a dozen dances more, you will find it perfectly easy."

"I find it extremely agreeable now," said Goldacre, gasping for breath, "so I think I need not go down the other half dozen to night."

Charles Oakwood danced with Margaret. Millichamp offered himself to me; but finding my days of dancing were over, he entertained my brother with a dissertation on the dancing of the Greeks.

The farmers' sons and daughters continued their exercise till four o'clock in the morning, when a breakfast was sent in, of tea, coffee, and hot cakes. They then played at my Lady's toilette, a scene of romping, in which gowns, petticoats, and caps fell to shatters, on the ground. The whole concluded with the Cushion Dance, which, as you may not have heard of, I will describe.

A young man of the company goes out; returns with a cushion in one hand, and a pewter pot in the other; and locks the door, that none of the women may escape. Advancing to the

fidlers (for here musicians aspire to no other name) he drops a penny into the pot, and gives it to one of his companions, who becomes the attendant of the dance. They then dance round the room; and coming to the fidlers again, the young man with the cushion says,

*This dance it will no further go.*

The fidler asks, *I pray, kind Sir, why say you so?*

The young man replies, *Because Joan Sanderson won't come to.*

*But,* answers the fidler, *she must come to, and she shall come to, whether she will or no.*

All this passes in a kind of jig recitative, between singing and saying, accompanied by the fiddles. The young man, having thus received the mandate of the village scraper, dances round again, till he comes to the girl

he likes best; when he drops the cushion at her feet. She puts her penny in the pewter pot; the young man and she kneel down together on the cushion, and he salutes her. When they rise, she takes up the cushion, and leads the dance; the man following, and holding by the skirt of her gown. Having made the circuit of the room, they stop again by the fiddlers; the same dialogue passes as before; with this difference only, that, as it is the woman who speaks, *John* Sanderson won't come to. She drops the cushion at the feet of the young man of her choice; and the dance goes on, till every man and woman, the pot-bearer last, has been taken out, and all have danced round the room in a string. The pence are the perquisite of the fiddlers; who like their part of the amusement so well, that, if

the cushion dance be not called for, at a country wake, they frequently strike up the tune, at the latter end of the dancing, that it may not be forgotten.

Seven o'clock in the morning finished the cushion dance, and sent the farmers and their families to their respective homes.

## LETTER XXXV.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

*Oakwood.*

As we were sitting after dinner to-day, "I think," said Millichamp, addressing himself to my brother, "you furnish the best part of the entertainment at Oakwood Statutes."

"I think so too," said Goldacre; "for the deuce is in it, if those that don't like dancing don't like beef and pudding."

"Give me the dancing," said Barbara; "I wish Oakwood Statutes came once a week; but you might take the beef and pudding."

"I am very fond of dancing," said Goldacre; "but I don't despise beef, especially when it's dressed *Ollamode;* and I think a nice pudding's a very suitable thing, after a good dinner."

"I can easily imagine that one person may have a fondness for dancing, and another for eating," said Millichamp; "but I cannot comprehend how rational beings can like such an exhibition as that which went under the name of a show."

"Our relish for shows depends on our degree of refinement," said my brother. "You, who have acquired a taste for higher amusements, have lost all idea of this. When you were a child, you would have laughed at the fool; and the minds of those who grin and gape at him have never emerged from that situation."

"Then my mind has not yet reached womanhood," said I. "It is true I could

not be entertained with the tricks of a Merry Andrew; but I have always liked shows; and if I lived in a large town, I should see almost all that were exhibited."

"There are different kinds of shows," said my brother, "and many are worthy the attention of a man of sense and science."

"But," said I, "I like wild beasts, and all strange animals."

"That is no greater proof of childishness, than it would be to say you liked natural history," replied my brother. "Surely, nature is a nobler study than books."

"But I go beyond nature," said I; "I like learned pigs, dancing dogs, and canary birds which perform the manual exercise; which remain immoveable when they are desired to fight for the Pope or the King of Spain, and

fire a cannon when they are bidden to fight for King George; though I own I feel some compunction, when I think of the means which must have been used to drill them."

"It is curious," said Millichamp, "and worthy a philosopher, to observe what animals are capable of. In these instances uncommon means have been used, to produce uncommon effects. I cannot defend their humanity, or wish them frequently repeated; but they have proved what would otherwise have been considered as impossibilities."

"But," said my brother to me, "have you no curiosity with regard to your own species? Have you never become acquainted with dwarfs, giants, white negroes, croppers, and young ladies who write, sew, and cut paper with their feet?"

"I banish all kinds of monsters," said I. "I would no more look at croppers and a girl without hands and arms, than I would at a calf with eight legs and a pair of heads. But I have visited three of the most remarkable men for size, that ever appeared in Great Britain;—O'Brien, the Irish giant; Borowlaski, the Polish dwarf; and the heavy Daniel Lambert."

"And which did you like best?" demanded Goldacre.

"Borowlaski," answered I; "but I pitied them all."

"I saw O'Brien," continued I, "when he was only eighteen. A crowd was assembled in a room, waiting his approach; and when he entered, dressed in long garments and a fierce cocked hat, we all ran back by instinct, as we should have done to escape the trampling of an elephant. He hung

one arm carelessly over the top of the door, invited the tallest of us to stand under the other, and measured his hand with the rest. I saw him again the last year of his exhibiting himself in public. I believe he was then taller than before. He would now have found it too great an exertion to have quitted and entered a room, and received his visitors sitting on a table. He rose to shew his height; but soon asked our permission to sit down again. His face was of a sickly hue. We were the only party present, and I entered into conversation with him. I reminded him of the time I had seen him before, when he was a dashing young man, and drove his own phaeton. He lamented his folly, and said that he now doubled himself up in a common post-chaise; that his way of life was fatiguing and unwholesome; and that he wished he had begun

sooner to lay by money for old age. He told us that every year, when his campaign was over, he retired to an old woman in a cottage; where he breathed a free air, took proper exercise, and recruited his exhausted strength. This was to be the last year of his toils. Too true, it was.—His toils and his life ended together."

"I should have liked to have seen O'Brien and Borowlaski at the same time," said my brother. "The contrast would have been very striking. I wonder they did not go into partnership."

"They'd have been fools if they had," said Goldacre; "for every body gave a shilling, to see them separate; and nobody would have given more, to have seen them together."

"I have often wished that Borowlaski had been under the protection of the Irish giant," said I; "for the poor

little fellow was not strong enough to pass through the world alone, and they who had the care of him abused their power. Few persons know Borowlaski better than myself; for I have seen him when he was not a shew. In the year 1786 he was exhibiting himself in our nearest market-town, and my mother and I were so pleased with him, that we frequently sent for him and his family to spend the whole day with us."

"Borowlaski was then forty-seven years of age, three feet three inches in height, and well proportioned, except that his head was rather too large for his body, and his hand rather too thick for its length. His features were agreeable and manly; his complexion pale; and his face indented with lines of care. Of his understanding I could not judge with precision, because he

spoke little English, and my ears were not sufficiently accustomed to French conversation to judge of it accurately; but I believe his capacity was rather above than under mediocrity. He wrote a very good hand, and danced and played on the guitar inimitably. I have seen him, in our drawing-room, sling his guitar round his neck by a ribband, and perform the single dances of his country, to his own music.

"There appeared some difficulty in knowing how to behave with propriety to a man, who announced himself as a count, yet exhibited himself to the meanest person who chose to pay a shilling; but the moment you were introduced, the point was settled. To say, in the vulgar phrase, that he was *a gentleman every inch of him*, would not be doing him justice, because his inches were few; but he was as well

bred as the finest gentleman, or the tallest man; and rude and ignorant must that person be, who could treat him with disrespect. In public, he repeated a few English sentences with smartness and an air of gaiety; but it was assumed; and in private he was grave, if not sad."

"The man who earned such a precarious and disgraceful livelihood," said my brother, "had reason to be sad; and, by what I have heard of his wife, she did not soothe his cares."

"The wife of Borowlaski," resumed I, "was a Pole, of French extraction, twenty years younger than himself. She was of the middle size; lively, handsome, gay, and agreeable, with a pair of fine black eyes. Her behaviour to her husband in company was equally distant from tenderness and impropriety. They had three daughters. The

eldest they had left in Germany, under the care of the Margrave of Anspach; the others, one of two or three years old, and an infant at the breast, were with them."

"Wicked men," said my brother, "have doubted his being their father."

"I have heard such doubts," replied I. "I can only say that I am certain he did not doubt it himself, and that he shewed them a fatherly affection."

Another of Borowlaski's family," continued I, "was a Mons. Detrouville, a Frenchman turned of fifty, a man of sense and reading, said to be the uncle of the lady. He spoke no English; and when I remarked it, he said, *On n'apprend plus de langue apres cinquante ans.* He seemed to have the guardianship of their persons, and the management of their affairs. Be-

sides this gentleman, who never appeared in public, they had two men, between decent and shabby, who received the money at the door, or carried Borowlaski in their arms, wrapped in a woman's cloak, when he went into the street. These two ate with them at home; but never came to our house."

"The foundation of all power," said Millichamp, "is bodily strength. Here was a man born with feelings and capacity like other men; but, diminutive in size, and consequently deficient in strength, he was led about the world like a child, and governed by a woman and her minions."

"I grieve to relate," said I, "that they who should have been his protectors, proved his greatest enemies. I saw Borowlaski again six years after, still shewing himself for a shilling; but

without wife, without children, without even the profit of his own exhibition; for he had sold himself to a master. I was told that his wife had placed him on a chimney-piece, in derision; and run away from him, before his face. I have never heard of him since; but I am still interested in his fate."

"I have much pleasure, then, in informing you," said my brother, "that his savings, and the subscriptions of some friends in the north, have secured him an independence. He lives upon an annuity at Durham; keeps house, and a woman servant; visits his friends, and is greatly respected by them. He is so well known, that he generally walks in the streets unregarded: but, by chance, some rude boys pursued him, and meeting a lady of his acquaintance, he begged leave to take her hand (her arm he could not reach)

as a protection from insult. We have now," continued my brother, "dispatched the giant and the dwarf; you have sent one to his long home, and I have provided comfortably for the other in this world; what have you to say upon Daniel Lambert?"

"That he is a shapeless mass of flesh," replied *I*, "measuring three yards four *inches* round the body, one yard one *inch* round the leg, and *weighing* seven hundred pounds! His face *is* agreeable and intelligent; but I had as much pleasure in seeing his *portrait* as himself."

"I should imagine, with your taste, ma'am," said Barbara, "that you would be highly gratified to see harlequin transformed into an old washerwoman; or an automaton playing on the flute."

"Very little," answered I. "Nei-

ther mummery nor the works of art interest me. I never saw a pantomime without contempt; or a piece of mechanism without disappointment. But I admire graceful motions of the human body, and feats of strength and agility, from the dancing at the Opera House, down to the tumbling at Sadler's Wells."

## LETTER XXXVI.

TO MISS CARADINE.

*Oakwood.*

I HAVE met with a stroke, my dear Maria, which has felled me to the ground, and from a quarter whence I expected support, rather than anguish. One consolation, however, I cannot be deprived of, unless I part with it voluntarily; I have not deserved ill usage. I will give you a circumstantial account of this incident; though I should find it difficult to write on any other subject.

Since the conversation with Mr.

Charles Oakwood, which I related to you in my last, I have used the utmost vigilance to prevent his finding me alone. I have never walked, unless with Mrs. Oakwood and Mr. Millichamp; and I have taken books, drawings, and needlework, into my own chamber.

Three months ago, Tom the waggoner, whose dispute with the footman I gave you an account of, married the kitchen maid, and Mr. Oakwood settled them as superintendants of the farm. One morning last week, Tom received a kick on the leg from one of his horses, and his wife came to my mother, who is the village doctress, for remedies and advice. My mother went back with her, dressed the wound, ordered the patient to lie in bed, and promised to send me down, in the af-

ternoon, to bring her an account of his situation.

I found the poor man much relieved. On coming down stairs, his wife requested me to walk into her parlour, to see some framed prints she had purchased, which, she said, I might like to copy. There I found Mr. Charles Oakwood, with a book in his hand, which I believe he had not been reading; for expectation appeared in his countenance. I took no notice of him, but cast a look at the prints, which were sorry engravings, and was following Mrs. Clements out of the room, when he slipped between us, locked the door, and put the key in his pocket.

"Margaret," said he, "I have you again, and you shall hear me. I have not explained myself properly; but I will now speak fully to your satisaction."

"Speak, then," said I, "and lose no time."

"I have loved you from the first moment I saw you, as I have often told you; but I loved you at first without any particular design. However, it is impossible to form any design respecting you, except one, and that is marriage. I have been thinking of it, day and night, and I am resolved to make you my wife. Your person, your manners, and your good qualities, would do honour to any station; and I am determined to ask my uncle's consent to marry you. He thinks very highly of you, and perhaps will overlook the difference in our family and fortune; if not, I will give up the expectation of his old oaks, and marry you without it."

"Indeed!" said I. "My consent, then, it seems, is out of the question."

"Why, my dear Margaret," said he, "you cannot be so romantic as to hesitate a moment between me and Millichamp, now you have it in your power to choose?"

"Most certainly, I cannot," replied I, and was proceeding, when the latch was tried forcibly, and I heard Mrs. Clements say, "Sir, you cannot go in; the key is on the other side." "Locked in!" I heard Mr. Millichamp exclaim; "then, indeed, I have no business here!"

"Mr. Charles," said I, half frantic; "unlock the door! Let me out this moment, or I will never speak to you again!"

"Finish what you were saying," replied he, "and I will."

"Open the door this instant," cried I; "or I shall grow desperate. I will not speak while it is shut."

He opened it. I darted out; I looked round for Millichamp; but he was gone. Mrs. Clements began to excuse herself; I listened not; I took the road home at a hasty pace. Mr. Charles followed, and endeavoured to detain me, but I broke from him. What he said, I know not; I made no answer, and did not stop till, exhausted by speed, terror, and vexation, I sunk down upon my own bed.

My unfortunate equivocal expression led Mr. Charles Oakwood into the same error as Millichamp. He went immediately in quest of his uncle, whom he found in the garden. He disclosed his love for me; repeated my fancied excellences; and earnestly implored his uncle's consent to his marriage with me. Mr. Oakwood replied, that he believed I was engaged to Millichamp. Mr. Charles succeeded in convincing

his uncle that I had given the preference to himself; and Mr. Oakwood exclaimed, "Margaret must have been more than woman, if she had not preferred you, with a great estate, to the philosopher, with a scanty one. I interfere with nobody's marriage; when I give advice, it is where I am more assured that I am right. Take her, if you like her."

Mr. Charles Oakwood did not stop here. Elated with his success in that point where only he feared opposition, he ran to my father, and told him that I had given up Millichamp in his favour; that he had his uncle's consent to our marriage; and that nothing remained, but to obtain his. My astonished father asked him if he were dreaming. He recounted all the particulars; and my father said, if such were the case, his proposal met his warmest wishes, and

he thanked him for the honour he did his daughter.

I did not go to the hall that night. I sat every moment expecting and wishing the coming of Millichamp, to demand an explanation. If I heard a leaf stir, it rustled at his approach. No, it was not he. Another, and another noise succeeded; still he did not come. When my father returned, I learned that Millichamp had entered the house soon after Mr. Oakwood; had ordered his horse, as the groom supposed, for an airing; had mounted him, and had been seen no more.

I hope it is not prophane in me to recur to the words in which the prophet addresses the Almighty; *What is man, that I am mindful of him?* when the calm, the candid Millichamp, who would not have condemned the meanest of his fellow-creatures, without weigh-

ing all he could offer in his defence; when Millichamp, who knows my love for himself, and my regard for truth, believes me guilty on appearances, and leaves me unheard!

I do not blame Mr. Charles Oakwood; though his locking the door was violent, he did it only to secure my attention to an offer which he considered as the greatest obligation he could confer upon me; and the world would consider it in the same light. I cannot blame myself; my will was no way concerned in the action; and, had another moment been given me, I had undeceived them both. Millichamp, alone, was to blame; he might have known me better than to have trusted his own ears.

I have had the painful task of undeceiving Mr. and Mrs. Oakwood, Mr. Charles, and my father. I should ra-

ther say, of attempting to undeceive them; for, though I have done it in the most explicit manner. Mrs. Oakwood alone believes me.

I am not well. My bed, which used to be the scene of sweet repose, my shelter from toil and care, I look upon with horror. I now experience in it sleepless, restless nights; and, when I do sleep, I rejoice if, on opening my eyes, I find it morning. My dream of happiness is over. My friends think that I shall marry Mr. Charles Oakwood; I look forward, with pleasure, only to smoothing the latter days of my parents, and preventing their wishes; and, if my life should be protracted beyond theirs, I am thankful for the prospect of independence in a single state.

I do not sink under sorrow without resistance. I wrestle with grief. I say

to myself, "I was happy before I knew Millichamp; why should I not be happy still? I have the same father and mother; I have the same employments and situation; and, added to these, I have Mrs. Oakwood, and the satisfaction of reflecting, that I have been the means of securing the happiness of my dear Maria, as far as it depends on the gifts of fortune." But reasoning and wrestling lull not to sleep. Time, alone, can draw the arrow from my heart. I pray God my life or my health may not be the sacrifice before that time come.

MARGARET FREEMAN.

## LETTER XXXVII.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

*Oakwood.*

Our little society at Oakwood, as once the Spectator's club was, is dissolving. I hope you will be sorry; for rather than you should have been weary of our conversations, I would have you feel as much as I have done for the death of Sir Roger de Coverley; or even for that of Don Quixote.

Millichamp is gone, in a way totally unexpected, and, to all but me, unaccountable.

It appears that my nephew has loved Margaret, and seized every opportunity of addressing her, during the whole time he has been here; at first,

I apprehend, with no very good intention. A little farmer's daughter probably seemed lawful prey to a man of his family and fortune; but Margaret's virtues have made an impression upon him, as well as her beauty; they have always called him to order, and have, at last, determined him to make her his wife. He has observed so much caution in his pursuit of her, that none of us suspected it. He concealed it carefully, because he had not decided to what lengths he should go: and she contented herself with repulsing him, without informing me, lest she should lower my nephew in my esteem; or Millichamp, lest she should rouse his jealousy, and produce a quarrel.

The proposal of marriage was made a fortnight ago, in the parlour of the farm-house, where Charles looked the

door, to oblige Margaret to hear him. Millichamp arrived, by accident, to inquire after the poor man, who had hurt his leg; heard Charles tell her that she could not hesitate between himself and Millichamp, now she had the choice of both; heard an unfinished expression of hers, which implied consent; attempted to open the door, and found it locked. This was too much even for a philosopher. He disappeared in a moment; at supper he was missing. As that was an hour in which we had always been sure of his company, my brother sent into the library; he was not to be found. At length one of the grooms told us, that he had ordered his horse, between five and six o'clock, and had ridden out. We sat till twelve, every instant expecting his coming; we then concluded it was his intention

to return no more; and so it has proved. We are all uneasy on his account. Goldacre says his nephew was born to plague him. "No sooner out of one scrape than he gets into another."

Goldacre dispatched messengers to every inn within twenty miles of Oakwood, in order to obtain intelligence of his nephew; and it was discovered that Millichamp had been at the first post-town on the road to Manchester. To this town Goldacre went himself; but, with all his sagacity and industry, he was not able to trace the wanderer any further. He then wrote to his housekeeper at home; but Millichamp had not been heard of there.

"Advertise him again," said I.

"If he was a bale of cottons," replied Goldacre, "the oftener he was advertised, and the more he was

known, the better; but I am loth to keep advertising my nephew for a madman."

"It would be of no avail now," said my brother. "An advertisement restored Millichamp to his duty, when love had led him astray; but he is now determined to avoid you, and all he loves best."

We do not fear his laying violent hands upon himself; for he has a dignity of mind that will support misfortune; but, always heedless, he will be ten times more so, now his mind is occupied by Margaret's supposed infidelity; and he cannot escape danger, if he do mischief.

The rash conduct of Millichamp seems astonishing to all but me. The reasoning, the dispassionate Millichamp, they say; whose fault, if he had one, was weighing things too scru-

pulously before he determined which should preponderate; that he should fly off at a tangent, without hearing Margaret's justification, is strange! To me, it seems natural. The reasoning Millichamp was also the unsuspecting Millichamp. Loving Margaret with all the powers of his soul; trusting that her love for him was equally fervent and sincere; finding himself at once deceived; could he argue the matter? could he stay to ask, "Why do you desert me for Charles Oakwood?" could he demand an explanation of what seemed to him as clear "as proofs of holy writ?" No. The man who could have deceived, or suspected deceit, might have listened to an excuse, or a justification. Millichamp could only fly; and, I am afraid, for ever.

The expression of Margaret imposed

upon Charles, as well as Millichamp. Believing himself sure of her, whenever he would condescend to propose marriage, and that the pains she took to avoid him, shewed only that she was not to be won on other terms; he took her approbation of his addresses as a thing of course, and immediately obtained that of my brother and John Freeman.

The poor girl does not like this transfer of her affections; she grows pale, and suffers, though she does not complain. They have given her to Charles; she enters her protest against it. She has undeceived them with regard to the ambiguous expression, and convinced them that the preference was meant for Millichamp: but the desertion of the one; with the person, fortune, and assiduities of the other; are to prevail in time; and she is

looked upon as the future mistress of Oakwood. It may be so; it will depend on Millichamp himself. If he return to claim a heart which is yet his own, it will be restored to him; if not, love must die for want of food; and I have no notion of one attachment disqualifying for another. The heart that has felt may feel again. Charles Oakwood is not exactly the object calculated to subdue that of Margaret; but he is handsome and good-natured; it is something that he is rich; but, beyond these, he has gratitude and opportunity in his favour. He loves her, and is upon the spot.

Some time after this incident happened, my brother, Mr. Goldacre, Barbara, and I, were sitting together; when Barbara left the room, and Goldacre, holding a button of his waistcoat fast in one hand for support, and

stroking his breeches knee with the other, thus began:

"I hope you won't take it amiss, sir; I've something to say to you, and I hardly know how to bring it out."

"Out with it," said my brother, "and get over the difficulty at once."

"Why, that's the best way, sir," resumed he; "I generally come to the point; and *truth may be blam'd, but it cannot be sham'd*; but this is rather a delicate business, and I'm not much used to it. However, the long and the short of it is this. I've got Miss Barbara in the mind, sir; and if you have no objection, I should be very glad of the honour of being your nephew."

My brother burst into a laugh; I looked at him with astonishment; and Goldacre seemed a little hurt. "Why, sir," said he, "is there any thing so

very absurd in my marrying Miss Oakwood?"

"By no means," replied my brother; "I was only thinking what a tight little nephew I should have. But," added he, "are you sure of Barbara's mind? Perhaps she may have only been diverting herself."

"I hope I a'n't such a fool as that comes to, neither," said Goldacre. "I ought to know a joke from a serious matter; and, if I had not been sure, I should hardly have asked you; for it's not so pleasant."

"I beg your pardon," said my brother. "If you are serious, I will be so too. Though I think every one should please himself, alone, in such a personal concern as marriage, yet I think it the duty of a friend to give an opinion, if he be required to do so."

"Then, pray, sir, let me hear yours," said Goldacre.

"I'll give it you in a word," replied my brother; "and then I'll wash my hands of the business. You had better put your fingers in the fire than marry Barbara Oakwood; and I give you a great proof of my regard, in telling you a truth that is likely to offend you."

"I won't be offended, I'll promise you," said Goldacre, "and I shall take it as a favour, if you'll tell me why you think so."

"Barbara," answered my brother, "has a good deal of the vixen in her. She is a tefmagant by inheritance; her mother was such before her. A man in the vigour of youth and strength would find it difficult to manage Barbara; it would require a Petruchio to do it. Time has thinned your flowing hair, and reduced you to a wig; you

are therefore less equal to the task. But I may be talking against your wife," continued my brother. "You may be already married!"

"No, no," said Goldacre, "we are not married yet; but I must own we've had some *thoughts of it*. I have bought the ring and the licence."

"That is the proper time to ask advice," said my brother; "I have given it; and now do as you please."

"Thank you, sir," replied Goldacre. "If matters had not been so far gone, I might have taken your advice; but, as it is, there's no help for it; and I think, sir, I'm not so very old, or so helpless, but I can make my own side good. I've always managed things well, hitherto."

"You have never had a handsome spirited young wife to manage," said my brother.

"No, sir," said Goldacre; "but she loves me, and that will go a great way."

"She loves your money," said my brother, "and she knows she can make that go a great way. She will scatter it over the globe."

"Why, sir," demanded Goldacre, "do you think I'm so old, or so disagreeable, that a woman could not love me, without my money?"

"Those are hard questions," answered my brother. "I cannot penetrate into the hearts of women; but the motives of Barbara will be clear to all the world, except yourself. She has a very small fortune; only three thousand pounds; which, as her father's executor, I now tell you; and she promises herself, as your wife, the disposal of a large one. It is my intention to give her something handsome at my

decease; but I bind myself by no promise; and I work so hard, that, I believe, I shall live long enough to keep it for her grandchildren."

"I pray God you may," said Mr. Goldacre; "for I do not marry her for money. But, sir, if I may be so bold," continued he, "how did that Mister *Pittrooshow*, that you was speaking of, manage his wife, when she proved untoward?"

"The story is long," replied my brother, "and the circumstance happened a long while ago. I can only tell you, that he kept her fasting and awake, till she would fetch and carry like a spaniel."

"A good clever gentleman, that," cried Mr. Goldacre; "only his method was a little savage! I shall never come up to that. I must eat myself; and I shall never find in my heart to

say, 'You shan't eat with me.' Well," continued Mr. Goldacre, "I thank you for your kindness, sir; but I've been considering that I may grow old, one day or other; and here's my nephew, that should have been the staff of my age, he's run away, and left me; though, to be sure, I'd some thoughts of marrying before he went; but, putting all things together, I shall want a companion, and some time or other, perhaps, a nurse; and I hope it will prove for the best: and I hope, ma'am," turning to me, "you'll give me leave to call you aunt?"

"You may as well continue to call me Mrs. Oakwood," replied I; "but I have no objection to your marrying my niece; and I wish you much happier than I think Barbara will make you."

"Thank you, ma'am; you're very

good, ma'am," said Mr. Goldacre. "It is too late to repent; you know the proof of the pudding; and that I must abide by now."

Preparations are making for the wedding. Mr. Goldacre proves his love by his generosity. He makes Barbara a noble settlement; he makes her a present of her own fortune; and patterns and packages arrive at Oakwood every day.

## LETTER XXXVIII.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

*Oakwood.*

Poor Goldacre has this day rivetted his own chains. I pity him very sincerely; he has only committed a folly, and who among us is exempt from folly? but his penance will be such as would expiate a crime. What a prospect, with a wife of Barbara's spirit, who cannot love his person, who must despise his manners, and who has not a heart to estimate the worthy part of his character!

My brother and I were seated in the breakfast-room, when he entered, in a new light drab coat, a white waistcoat, black silk breeches, and white silk

stockings. The carriages were at the door. Barbara made us wait half an hour. She then made her appearance, arrayed in the richest satin and most costly lace. The poor man seemed afraid to touch her hand. My brother took her to church, and gave her to the happy bridegroom, who received the blessing with becoming reverence. I attended in quality of bride's-maid; though rather too ancient for such a juvenile office. The behaviour of Barbara was intrepid. The ceremony over, Mr. Goldacre handed his blooming bride into her own carriage, and my brother and I were content to bring up the rear of the shew.

"My dear," said Mr. Goldacre, as we sat at breakfast, "considering you never was married before, you went through the ceremony with surprising courage. Though it is the happiest

day I ever saw in my life, I felt, I can't tell how."

"Those are very uncomfortable feelings," said Barbara, "and I never encourage them."

"They are the last uncomfortable feelings I ever shall have where you are concerned," returned Goldacre; "for I am not likely to bury you, and we've nothing to do now, but be happy."

"For God's sake, my dear Mr. Goldacre," said his bride, "do not talk of burying and happiness both in a breath, lest I should think of burying you."

"That's a good one, however," said Goldacre. "You must have your jest."

"Yes," replied she; "but you, who know so many proverbs, have heard that *many a true word is spoken in jest.*"

"Barbara," said I, with some stern-

ness, "never let your jest glance at your husband."

Before we parted, I gave my niece much good advice. Gifts of another kind she does not need; and this, I fear, will be thrown away.

Margaret breakfasted with us. Barbara treated her with coldness; though she condescended to invite her into Lancashire. I believe she had rather see her the wife of her brother, than of Millichamp; as that precludes all idea of rivalship, and the other was a post she had once reserved for herself. I have no doubt that revenge was her first motive for spreading her net for his uncle.

Mr. Goldacre has behaved to Margaret, for some time past, with a kind of fatherly affection; and, since the departure of Millichamp, his air has been soothing whenever he has ad-

dressed her. At taking leave of her, the tear started in his eye.

"If Richard hadn't been hot-headed," said he, "thou'dst ha' been his wife this day, as Mr. Oakwood's niece is mine; and a good wife thou'dst ha' made him. I never knew him such a fool before. But if I mustn't be thy uncle, I'll be thy friend; and come to me if ever thou want'st one. I've got a bauble here to give thee for a keep-sake."

He then presented her with a beautiful enamelled watch, set with pearls. Believing it of great value, she shewed some reluctance to accept it, till he said, "Do'st not love me well enough to take my keepsake?" She then took the watch with one hand, and gave him the other, while a tear stole silently down her cheek.

Mr. Goldacre made noble donations

to the servants on this happy occasion, and, after breakfast, took away his bride. Her brother accompanied them to the place where they dined. Our steeple, at Oakwood, shewed every demonstration of joy it was capable of; though, had Barbara arrived at the consummation of her wishes which she hinted at, its note would have been the same. Its single bell has tolled the whole day. My brother had all the tenants to dinner, and the young people are now dancing, like David, with all their might.

Millichamp has not been heard of, and every day lessens our expectations of seeing or hearing from him again. Possibly he waits to hear the dreaded event confirmed, before he leaves his hiding-place. Mistaken man! he is taking the only method to accomplish it! Margaret has given up every hope

of seeing him. She does not aim at cheerfulness; but is composed. She looks ill, however, and so thin, that I am afraid of her going into a decline. Charles is extremely attentive to her, without being officious. She does not avoid him, as heretofore, though I sometimes observe that she does not listen when he speaks; but he is grateful for this negative mark of her favour, and his attachment to her has made him more sedate, and less presumptuous.

I leave Oakwood next week; and I think of looking at South Wales, a part of the principality which I am wholly a stranger to, before I return home. I look forward with great pleasure to the meeting you and a few other friends; but I feel something like remorse in quitting my brother, when

the leaves will soon fall off his trees, and winter evenings confine him to his fireside. I leave him to his labour and his books; to John Freeman, history, and politics; all he had before I came. But it is not vanity in me to say that I have *increased his happiness*; and it is with pain I shall diminish it. I shall return to him at the earliest approach of spring, and perhaps, after this time, we may part no more.

My brother, however, has a fault so inveterate, that it admits of no cure, and so distressing to me, that I have had some scruples about remaining near him; he not only neglects his own comfort and accommodation when they come in competition with mine, but even his personal safety. I could give you a hundred instances of this; but one will suffice. We were walking in

the park the other day, when we were unexpectedly overtaken by a shower of rain; and no arguments or entreaties of mine could prevent him from taking off his coat, hanging it over my shoulders, and walking home by my side in his shirt sleeves.

I take Margaret with me. Change of air is necessary for her health, and change of scene for her peace. She will share a post-chaise with Anson; while I, who prefer free air and an open carriage, and fear no sort of bad weather, but the extremely bad, shall go in my own gig, which I have sent for. Charles asked my permission to attend us, which I refused; but I have given him leave to join us at Belmont House. I give him every opportunity of pleading his cause with Margaret; because she is exactly the woman I

could wish for his wife. He wants a little discretion; she has enough for both. But my brother and I have agreed not to exert the smallest influence in his favour; because we are assured that Millichamp still loves her, in whatever corner of the world he may be barking; and we think he is better entitled to her than our nephew.

Mrs. Simpson came into my dressing-room this morning; "I'm very sorry, ma'am," said she, "to find Mrs. Anson is packing. She's going to send off a couple of great trunks, and I've been helping her; for she's as good-natured a young woman as ever came into a house; and she tells me you're going to leave us next week, ma'am."

"I assure you, Mrs. Simpson," said I, "I am very sorry to leave

you; so sorry, that when I come again, I may probably make Oakwood my home."

"I wish with all my heart you would, ma'am," replied she; "for you're so quiet, and so easy to be pleased, and never gives no trouble, nor makes no mischief, that I'm ten times sorrier to hear you're a going, than ever I was to hear you was a coming; and I'm sure that was not a little. For, here, says I to myself, my master and I have liv'd together so many years, and been so comfortable, and I never knew what it was to have a mistress, and hardly what it was to have a master, for my master never contradicts me in nothing; and here's a fine lady coming; and this will be wrong, and 'tother will be wrong; and this must be done, and that must be done; and I shall

have no comfort of my life; but, however, I need not have gone to meet sorrow half-way, for it never came: and now, when you're gone, ma'am, and Mrs. Anson and Mr. James is gone, the house will be so *soluntary*, I sha'n't *abide it.*"

The good word of servants is grateful to my ears. They know us intimately; and, though their faculties of judging are limited, they are unerring, as far as they go.

## LETTER XXXIX.

TO MRS. BRUDENELL.

*The Vale of Neath.*

I DETERMINED to go to Llandrindod Wells, where I imagined I might find pure air and a little society; and as it was impossible for me to obtain any intelligence respecting South Wales in a place so distant and so obscure as Oakwood, I could only travel by the light of a map. Guided by this, we arrived at the little town of Bromyard in Herefordshire, where I began my inquiries concerning Llandrindod; but all I could learn was, that nobody knew any thing about it, and that it was be-

lieved no person in Bromyard had ever been there.

My map then directed us to Leominster. If beauty consist in waving lines, the country between Bromyard and Leominster is most beautiful; for there is not a straight line in it. It is not composed of hill and dale, but of successive hills; and some of the ascents and descents of the road were neither small nor gentle. The views were frequently extensive, and the grounds were rich in pasture, grain, and wood.

At Leominster, Llandrindod was still terra incognita. All had heard of it; but none had seen it, or could give any account of it. Innkeepers, waiters, and post-boys know but one stage beyond their dwelling; and they are not competent judges even of this, for want of an opportunity to compare it with others: of the road to Kington, how-

ever, which was the first stage towards Llandrindod, their intelligence was very explicit. They said, that it was so deep in winter, that the axletrees dragged along the top of the mud; and that two post-boys had been six hours in driving a post-chaise with four horses the fourteen miles, although the two gentlemen expecting to have been driven, had walked a great part of the way. They added, that the road had been in this state lately; but that a post-boy who had driven a hearse through it five days ago, had found that it was beginning to *crust*, and he believed we might go very well.

Why should I go to Llandrindod? Why take the chance of going very well now, when a rainy season, or even a rainy day, might render it difficult to get back again? I knew nothing of the place, and nothing could discover; so

I made my bow to Mr. Llandrindod, thinking that, since he was unknown in his own country, it was not worth my while to drag through such roads to find him out.

This point determined, the next was, where we *should go?* The Hay was *only* twenty-two miles distant, and it was the entrance into South Wales; to the Hay, therefore, we directed our course. We found that the first part of the road had been accurately described by the hostler, as reported by my man.—"Great holes, and stones as big as horses' heads." Care avoided generally both one and the other; and after some time the road improved, and the villages were beautiful. I was struck with the land and the husbandry of this part of Herefordshire. Excellent crops, good farm-houses, barns and other out-buildings on a noble scale, vast heaps of

manure, and an air of neatness and management that pervaded the whole, announced the richness of the soil and the wealth of the occupier.

Near the Hay, we crossed the Wye, which had come down from Hereford to meet us, and soon afterwards we passed through the village of Clifford on its eastern bank. Here I saw the ruins of an ancient castle, the birth-place and residence of the beautiful and unfortunate Rosamond; that Rosamond, so exquisitely fair, that her surname is generally lost in the epithet.

The approach to the Hay is striking. The town is situated on a hill, under the termination of that ridge of loftier hills called the Black Mountain. In the upper-tier are the remains of a castle, with a large mansion of more recent date adjoining, which is now called the castle; the high road runs along the

middle, and the Wye washes the bottom. The way is steep and rugged, and the town is poor. We entered it over a brook which divides Herefordshire from the county of Brecon; and the town of Hay did not impress us with a favourable idea of South Wales.

At the Hay I was informed that I was in the direct road to Swansea, and that it was only fifty-four miles distant. Going to Swansea was, of all things, the farthest from my thoughts; for I had heard that the production of the earth in its vicinity was copper, and that it was turned to such good account, that the air was poisoned by the effluvia. I could, however, have no objection to going to Brecon, which was fifteen miles of the way, and represented as a very fine ride; so I resolved to proceed, post-boy fashion, knowing only one

stage before me. As we quitted the Hay, the Milford mail-coach followed us down the hill as if there were a plate for running coaches, and it had started for the race. I would no sooner stand in its way, than in that of a lion or tyger; it is the wild beast of four wheels.

Our road lay along a beautiful vale, first of the Wye, and then of the Llunvy, bounded on the left by what I should call mountains; but the good people of the county of Brecon have agreed to denominate the huge excrescences of their country, hills. At Brinllys we saw a tower remaining of the ancient castle. As we approached Brecon, the road ran over higher and ruder lands, and these ended in a steep descent into the vale of the Honddy, which, before we entered the town, consisted of little more than the river, with its boundaries of rock and wood,

Brecon is a handsome town, with a good market-place and good houses; but what principally commanded my attention, and induced me to stay two days at the place, was the inn, which is situated on a rock above the town.

The Castle Inn at Brecon is a commodious and spacious modern erection, which occupies a part of the site of the ancient castle. What was removed to make room for it, I did not dare to inquire. In front, still higher up the rock, two portions of the old building remain, one of which, consisting of two towers, I believe has been the entrance; but modern hands have been too busy here. Sycamores, poplars, and larches, which are now dwarfs in the presence of giants, and little noticed, will soon encroach upon the stately ivy-mantled towers, and be not only intrusive, but incongruous.

Behind the inn are two other towers, which are connected with it by a portion of the ancient wall. One of these has been grievously hacked and hewn by time; the other is entire, and converted into——I dare not tell you what. The terrace behind the Castle Inn commands a view of three vales, with their fine meadows, woods, and habitations; and the whole forms a grand amphitheatre, bounded by magnificent hills.

At Brecon I made inquiries concerning the road to Swansea, having almost persuaded myself to expose my olfactory nerves to the copper. The first stage was twenty-two miles distant, and it was the Lammon Flag. This was one of the Welsh flags I was unacquainted with; but our waiter was a man of business, and I did not ask him any superfluous questions, as I had

many to trouble him with that were necessary: by dint of my own reflections, however, which are now and then a little profound, I discovered that the sign of the house must be the Lamb and Flag. The whole of what I could collect respecting the road was this: "Exceeding hilly"—"we never go without four horses"—"scarcely a house by the way"—"hard, and a little rough, but good safe road." But you are not to imagine that all this intelligence burst upon me at once. No: it was the reward of my utmost efforts, and dealt out in small portions; for safe as the road was, and the next stage to their own dwelling, neither master, waiter, nor hostler had ever seen the Lamb and Flag. I even begged to be introduced to one of the post-boys; but the only information added to my stock, though I own it was important,

was, that at fifteen miles from Brecon there was a yellow house on the right hand which would afford some refreshment.

Having met with every accommodation at the Castle at Brecon which its elegant appearance seemed to promise; and every attention from its master, mistress, and servants, which a family of the first distinction could have required; they all assembled at the door to set us off, and Jonathan Edwards, the master, wished us a safe and pleasant journey.

For four miles and a half our road lay along one of the vales I had seen from the back of the Castle Inn; when we left it for one more rugged and narrow, which ran up a hill on our right. —But, at the bottom of this hill, let us stop a few moments.

I love to generalize my geographical

ideas; to take, at one view, as much of a country as my imagination can compass; and I have found that in North and South Wales, in Cumberland and Westmoreland, and doubtless it is the same in other mountainous districts, that the country and the roads are under the regulation of invariable laws. The great masses of our earth which we call mountains, give birth to rivers; wherever there is a river, there is a vale; these run in all directions; and that no two vales should approach each other, except where rivers join, there is always a barrier between them of hills, rocks, or mountains, more or less steep and lofty, as the general features of the country are savage or wild. Now we see the country, let us get over it.

We pass along a vale till it either ends, or pursues a different course from that we are to go; we then seek

the most accessible place in the barrier, and we ascend it. This is sometimes a hollow between the summits of two mountains, which in the Welsh language is called a *bwlch*, or *notch*; sometimes it is a shelf of rock; and sometimes, but that is seldom, it admits of cultivation. Having gained the top of the pass, we descend into another vale, and the same course is repeated.

Now we will mount the hill, at the foot of which I have detained you by my observations. It was the first step of one of these barriers, these ribs that connect mountain to mountain, and separate vale from vale. The ascent continued nearly a mile; but it was not very steep, and I considered the five miles and a half I had passed, as a handsome deduction from the twenty-two of Brecon hills with which I had been threatened. Here was an end of

cultivation. We entered upon high and open lands; the Bryn Melin hills, covered with sheep and cattle, rising on our left, and before us. Our road was seen winding round the side of one lofty hill, and afterwards ascending another. *In a deep recess* between the two, which is called *Crom dû*, the *Black hollow*, stood a solitary turnpike; a boy and girl, who understood our money, but not our language, were the keepers of the gate. The steep and rugged ascent before me shocked my eyes, and I held the reins in fearful silence, while my servant led the horse, crossing the road continually, to avoid huge loose stones, and pieces of solid rock.

Having reached the summit, I found I had mounted another step of the barrier between two vales.

A trifling descent brought us into Llah, a hollow, though on very

high ground. The country was wild beyond imagination; neither house nor shed, tree nor shrub, being within view. A moderate ascent from Cwm Liah conducted us to the top of this mountainous barrier; a vale opened before us; and a most mighty descent brought us into it at the village of Ystrad Velltey, fifteen miles from Brecon. During the last nine or ten miles of the way, we had certainly passed no house, for the hut of the turnpike was a shelter only for the day; but I believe we were never without houses in view, except in Cwm Liah, and our entrance into, and exit out of, the presence of that monarch of dreary Cwms.

At the New Inn at Ystrad Velltey, the yellow house on the right hand, we found butter, cheese, milk, and oat-cake. I should observe, however,

that there are two New Inns in the village; but if ever any of my friends should go to the Lamb and Flag by this road, I shall recommend the bread and butter of the first.

I had an opportunity of seeing a part of the *mode of husbandry practised* at Ystrad Velltey; that of carrying manure from the farm-yard. You will scarcely imagine that a waggon was employed in this business. No, not a cart; not even a sledge. Two horses stood in a nook where the cattle had been foddered, with each a pair of small wooden paniers. These were the receptacles for the manure; and when the horses had borne it to the destined field, a sliding board would be drawn out of the bottom of the panier, and the contents scattered upon the land.

In the church-yard of Ystrad Velltey,

as in other parts of South Wales, every grave is a garden. A large thin stone is reared at the head, a smaller at the feet, and smaller still are ranged all round, in the form of the coffin; the earth, thus supported, is then planted, either with wild flowers, or with such as are cultivated in gardens. I noticed London pride, columbines, and Greek valerian; and southernwood and lavender were universal. Some persons suffered grass and nettles to intermix with this tribute of respect to their deceased friends; but I apprehend that these were either the absent, or those of irregular habits: the greater number of the little parterres was free from weeds, and kept in perfect order. The rankness of the vegetation proclaims the soil which occasions it; and I am not certain that it would not hurt

my feelings to see my parent or my brother literally changed into a flower.

The vale of Ystrad Velltey did not point to the Lamb and Flag. We had another barrier to cross, to arrive at the vale of Neath, in which that Lamb and that Flag are situated; and this barrier was not mountainous, but rocky. A long and steep ascent like the first, brought us again upon open lands; but instead of mountains on our left, we saw patches of land fenced out, in which the miserable husbandman was mowing an almost invisible crop of grass.

The road now assumed a different form. It was a rounded and narrow causeway, which at some distance had the appearance of turf, from the grass which grew in all the interstices between the stones of which it

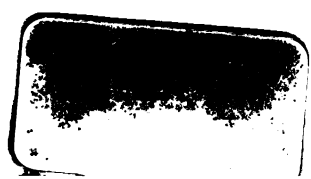
was composed; but touch it, and nothing could be more unlike. I can give you no better idea of it than that of brick ends as hard as iron, with their edges and corners uppermost, set fast in a cement of rock. The whole had resisted every impression of a wheel since its first formation, and might almost have been mistaken for native rock with small angles, if it had not been sometimes powdered with loose stones, newly laid on.

Here we had only to get over one hill, to arrive at another equally steep and stoney, till a succession of tremendous dips brought us into the beautiful Vale of Neath, at the village of *Pont Neath Vaughan*, the *Bridge* of *Little Neath*; and two miles along the bases of the rocks which skirt the vale, brought us to the welcome Lamb and Flag.

I could here moralize upon our road, and compare its ups and downs to those of human life. Had I the genius of John Bunyan, I might make a delectable allegory of the troubles of dreary mountains, the trials of rugged rocks, and the temptations of smiling vales; but I am no John Bunyan; and I will neither entangle myself, nor weary you.

Margaret has been, during the greater part of this journey, an interesting picture of calm and silent sorrow. She has ridden in abstracted meditation, with her eyes cast down; or, if they were raised for a moment, without distinguishing the objects before her. I have not aimed at giving consolation, thinking it would be a painful effort to myself, and an unavailing one to her; but I have administered a medicine which could

scarcely fail of producing a salutary effect; change of scene and of air. The view from the castle at Brecon first awakened her, and awakened her almost to rapture; the romantic vale of Neath has again roused her, and I have sent her to explore some part of it, attended by Anson, who, unknown to her, carries a sketch-book and a pencil. I hope, by the time I reach home, I shall be able to present my young friend to you with only a melancholy remembrance of her disappointment.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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